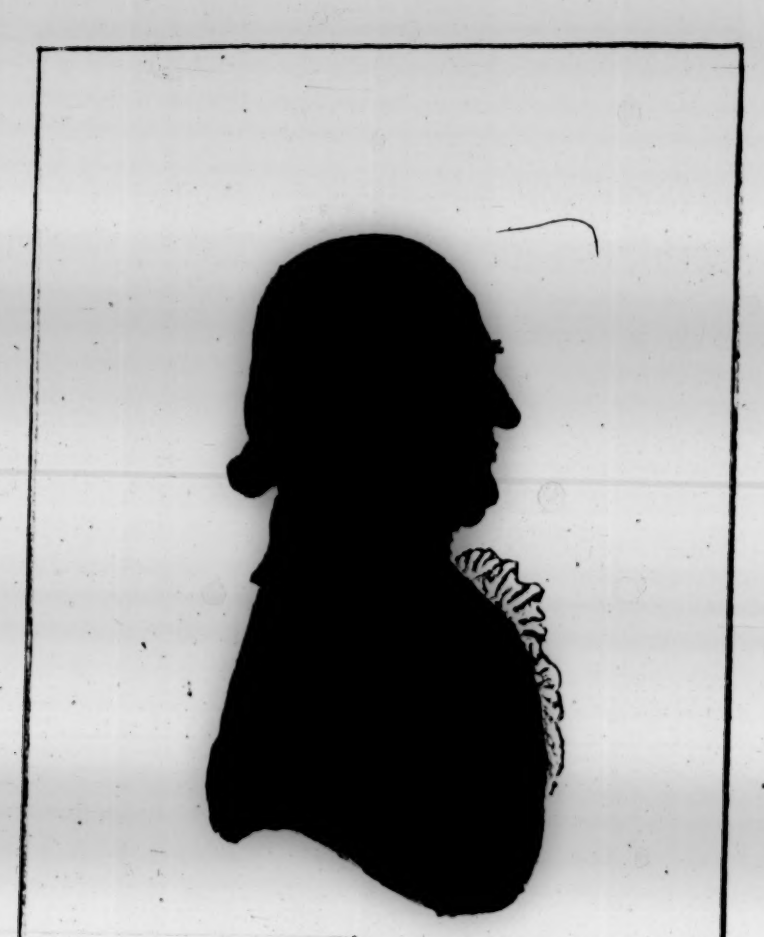
Ph.D. Dissertation 8369

JOSEPH BERINGTON AND THE ENGLISH CATHOLIC CISALPINE MOVEMENT 1772 - 1803.

A Dissertation submitted in candidacy for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Divinity, University of Cambridge, by:

Eamon Duffy,
Selwyn College.

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REV. JOSEPH BERINGTON.

From a silhouette reproduced in the Catholic Directory for 1831.

From my Lord
Yr dutiful & affte Servt
J Berington

Reasons for altering our church-government,
or
for withdrawing from it.

1.— That the government of our church, by Bishops agents or vicars apostolic, is an evident departure from the rule practised by other churches, which rule the discipline of ages has sanctioned

2.— That this government was introduced in 1685, invito et inscio toto clero, after they had unsuccessfully laboured, for many years, by repeated applications to Rome, to obtain regular bishops with ordinary jurisdiction.

3.— That the clergy, aware of the irregular system & of the evils that must arise from it, professed, at the time, that they only acquiesced in the measure, when, from the conduct of James II, on the occasion, & the influence Rome had obtained over him & others, all further resistance was become useless.

4.— That, from the state of coercion in which the Catholics were held from the time of the Revolution to the reign of his present majesty, & from the prudent & moderate conduct of the vicars apostolic, as they followed in succession, few or no complaints were made against the system itself or its administration, though no time

Berington's Mss. "Reasons for altering our Church Government."

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His Lordship the Bishop of Leeds

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The Rector of St. Cuthbert's College, Ushaw.

The Rector of St. Joseph's College, Upholland.

The Rector of St. Mary's College, Oscott.

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The Scottish Catholic archives having for a number of years been closed as a result of the prolonged illness of the late Archivist, Fr. Anderson, Dr. Fuller kindly gave me the use of his extensive notes and transcripts of the Geddes Papers, thereby making available to me a valuable source for 'Cisalpine' opinion.

Lastly I should like to thank my wife, who, on two fingers, manfully turned my manuscript into type.

ABBREVIATIONS

A.A.W.,	Archives of the Archbishop of Westminster.
B.A.A.	Birmingham Archdiocesan Archives.
C.C.M.B.	Minute book of the Catholic Committee.
Clifton	Archives of the Bishop of Clifton,
C R S	Volumes of the Catholic Record Society
Dawn,	Dawn of the Catholic Revival (Ward)
E.C.	Eyre Correspondence; Ushaw College
EVE	Eve of Catholic Emancipation (Ward)
Farm Street,	Jesuit Archives, Farm Street, W.1.
Leeds,	Archives of the Bishop of Leeds.
Propaganda Scrit. Anglia	Archives of the S. Congregatio di Propaganda Fide, Scritture Rifeste nei Congressi, Anglia.
Throck.Mss.	Throckmorton Manuscripts, Coughton Court, Worcestershire.
U.C.H.	Ushaw College History.
U.P.A.	Ushaw College, President's Archives.
Upholland,	Archives of Upholland College, Lancashire.
Ushaw Mss.	Ushaw College Manuscript Collections.

Preface

"The history of opinions is as instructive and amusing as the history of battles", observed Sir John Throckmorton in 1792; and few periods of Catholic thought in England present a more warlike aspect than that in which Sir John lived and wrote.[1] The last twenty years of the eighteenth century saw the English Catholic community torn assunder by disputes which, to contemporaries, seemed certain to end in Schism with Rome, and so destroy the heritage of the martyr church. Laymen "rose against the sanctuary"; committees of gentry swapped anathmas with Bishops; and from the Catholic publishing houses issued a blizzard of acrimonious pamphlet literature, ecclesiastical sedition and the authoritarian counterblasts it provoked. Behind these troubles lay the desire for emancipation, and a great uncertainty among Catholics as to what, and how much, of the Church's 'separateness' could be surrendered to a Protestant nation for the privilege of recognition as men and citizens.

From the disputes two parties emerged. On the one hand were the Vicars apostolic, their advisers among the lower clergy, and influential laymen like the Welds of Lulworth, with strong family traditions of involvement with and support for the rules of the English Mission. Cautious and conservative, fearful for the integrity of the Catholic community, they were determined to "guard the

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1. A letter addressed to the Catholic Clergy of England, on the Appointment of Bishops. 2nd Edition (London 1792) p.vi.

deposit". Content with the tacit acceptance accorded Catholics by the nation at large, they saw no reason to jeapordize that quiet for the same of trifling and short-term gains in the field of civil rights. Such men would accept with the greatest caution anything offered by a hitherto hostile Parliament in the way of legal relief, and were inclined to take a gloomy view of the probable consequences of such "benefits", Bishop Challoner saw in the Relief Act of 1778, not the first gleam of dawn after long darkness, but a potentially explosive cause of public anger against Catholics; and the Gordon Riots had seemed to vindicate his gloom.

In opposition to this episcopal party stood the Cisalpines. They included members of the oldest and best Catholic families of the day; nobles, clergy, and gentry; men like Lord Petre and Lord Stourton, Sir Henry Englefield, Sir Robert Throckmorton and his grandson Sir John; the Huddlestons of Sawston; Charles Butler, the leading Catholic lawyer of the century; divines like Dr. John Bew, and Dr. James Archer, a celebrated preacher and one of the most hard-headed Catholics of his generation; Dr. Thomas Hussey, afterwards Bishop of Waterford, the friend of Johnson and a trusted government servant; and Joseph Berington, historian and controversialist, the most extreme, as he was the most learned, of the Cisalpines.

History has not been kind to them. They have been pictured as ambitious and dressy socialists, out of touch with the hard core of Northern working-class Catholicism, eager for public office, and ready to compromise even their religion in order to gain it; the party of privilege and a bad lot. The best that so charitable and fair-minded an historian as Bernard Ward could do for them was to plead that at heart they were "sound", misled by hot-headedness and

ignorance, and to hint at death-bed repentances.[1] Yet no serious attempt has been made to determine precisely their beliefs. Lazy and vaguely abusive terms like "Erastianism" and "veiled Gallicanism" have been pressed indiscriminately upon a mode of thought which has its own place within the continuity of English Catholic life; and which, though without any real profundity, was neither so outrageously new nor so limited in its appeal as has sometimes been assumed. In this study I shall attempt to sketch the main lines along which Cisalpinism developed, and the conditions which brought it to birth, and to its effective dissolution under the strong right arm of Bishop Milner.

The essay which follows is built round the figure of the Reverend Joseph Berington, remembered now chiefly for two books, The State and Behaviour of English Catholicism, a source-book for the condition of Catholics in the 1780's, and the Memoirs of Panzani, a contribution to the history of the wearisome 'chapter' disputes of the seventeenth century. But Berington was more than a two-book author. His mind was "a microcosm of contemporary Catholicism in England, in which the traditional stern rigidity is at odds with liberal dreams and naive, innaccurate, theology".[2]

He was in many ways a traditionalist, cherishing the prejudices

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1. For a lively but unsympathetic account, see David Matthew, Catholicism in England 1535-1935 (London 1936) pp.146-147. For a detailed survey of the period, and a more sympathetic picture, Bernard Ward's Dawn of the Catholic Revival in England 1781-1803. 2 vols (London 1909) passim; and for Lord Petre's "repentance" see Dawn, Vol.2. p.246. For a modern "Cisalpine" accound see Maud Petre, The Ninth Lord Petre (London 1928)

2. J.C. Aveling 'Catholics of the West Riding' Proceedings of the Leeds Philosophical .. Society, X. pt.6, p.266-7.

and virtues of the English Secular clergy, their anti-monastic, anti-Jesuit bias, their austere devotional tradition, their longing for a restored 'English' church. He was also an innovator: the friend of Priestley, an applauder of the French Revolution, an apostle of Reason. Himself a member of the Catholic gentry, he shared too, their impatience with inferior civil status, their yearning for freer and broader fields to roam. In his career, therefore, the strongest forces of eighteenth century Catholicism met and blended, and his writings and activities provide a commentary on the rebellion against the Vicars Apostolic which Bishop Ward found so puzzling. "It is difficult" wrote Ward, "to define the causes of the rising at this time of an anti-clerical spirit in the Catholic body, or to analyse the feelings which in their ultimate issue resulted in actions which seem now almost incredible. We cannot believe that such good and devout members of the Catholic laity could have been at heart disloyal". [1.]

It is the aim of what follows to cast some light on that dark issue.

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1. Dawn I, p.87

This dissertation is the result of my own individual work and no part has been carried out in collaboration with anyone else.

Conan Duffy

CHAPTER I

Status Missionis.

"... the long winter of persecution". [1]

"Who does not know that there are many Romish priests in England, and that to be sure, they are maintained? and tho' we have laws against them, yet mankind in general agree to neglect prosecuting or searching after them; and out of a principle of humanity, let the ROMAN CATHOLICKS enjoy their opinions privately". [2]

CHAPTER I

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Voltaire defined history as "the accepted fiction"; a sentiment no doubt less true than striking, but to which the religious history of eighteenth century England lends some support. For long the historian of the Hanoverian church guided himself by a few well-known landmarks, the imaginative symbols which contained the whole story of an age - Hoadly on his crutches, preaching of a Kingdom not of this world: Butler declining to support a falling church; mud-bespattered Wesley speaking tranquilly from a tomb-top, while strong men wept out their sins. For the Roman Catholic historian, too, there existed an authorized version, eloquently formulated in Newman's sermon on the "Second Spring". Through a splendid haze of rhetoric the eighteenth century Catholic might be seen picking his fearful way through London sidestreets, to a garret guarded by Hibernian giants, where white-haired and heroic prelates hurried through the adorable sacrifice. A survey of the anti-Catholic legislation on the Statute books until 1791 provided the necessary historical evidence for this picture, and accounts of Bishop Challoner preaching in a tavern to a beer-drinking congregation clinched the matter.[3] "The eighteenth century" wrote Doctor Burton "... was for English Catholics a time of depression, of lost hopes and discouragement. Their numbers steadily, if slowly, dwindled

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1. E. Burton Life and Times of Bishop Challoner (London 1909) p.xix.

2. The present State of Popery in England, Discovering a New Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction exercis'd by Apostolical Vicars &c ... and other Advances lately made by them (London 1733) p.iv.

3. E. I. Watkin Roman Catholicism in England from the Reformation to 1950 (London 1957) p.124
Dom Basil Hemphill The Early Vicars Apostolic of England (London 1954) pp.46-7, 80-2.

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away, and there seemed no future but one of gradual extinction. Under every kind of civil and social disability they were excluded from public life and rendered powerless; and in this way the government effected its purpose of keeping them impotent and subdued". [1.] This was the necessary darkness upon which the Dawn of the Catholic Revival broke.

There is of course, much truth in all this. After the accession of William, the Catholic community did decline in numbers; the annals of the Roman Church militant lose the piquancy imparted by rack and rope, and the clergy who tended the sheep of Peter under the Georges seem, by comparison with Campion and Southwell, very dull dogs. From time to time sons of martyr and confessor stock took the Oaths, and another Catholic centre fell, the price of a peer's or baronet's parliamentary career. Yet the picture of a dwindling church, grimly and blindly fighting a losing battle against the pressures of a hostile society is a misleading one. Hanoverian England sat easy to its religion; persecution was as alien to the minds of the men of those times as was any other form of zealotry. If the disputes which disturbed the Catholic community in the last quarter of the century are to be understood, then it must be grasped that the English Catholic church was not the tradition's haunted remnant, but an accepted and largely unmolested part of a pluralist religious scene. Catholics were not, to be sure, at ease in Zion, but they occupied a tolerable enough quarter of a peaceful Babylon. [2.]

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1. John Kirk Biographies of English Catholics in the Eighteenth Century, edited by J.H. Pullen and Edwin Barton (London 1909) p.ix.

2. See R. W. Linker's "English Catholics in the 18th Century; an interpretation" in Church History xxxv (1966) pp.288-310. Linker badly overstates his case for "Catholic well-being" but his main point, that things weren't as bad as is usually claimed, stands.

To be a Roman Catholic in the eighteenth century meant, for the most of the period, membership of a community which was undoubtedly declining. In the first decades of the century Catholics numbered somewhere in the region of 100,000 or about two per cent of the total population.[1.] The returns of the Vicars Apostolic in 1773 give a figure of 59,500; the parliamentary estimate of 1781 sets Catholic numbers at 69,376, significantly less than one per cent of the total population.[2.] For Catholic observers these were more than bald figures: they were cause for despondency. Joseph Berington wrote in 1780 "The truth is, within the present century we have most rapidly decreased. Many congregations have entirely disappeared in different parts; and in one district alone, with which I am acquainted, eight out of thirteen are come to nothing ... In the nature of things, it could not possibly be otherwise. Where one cause can be discerned tending to their increase, there will be twenty found to work their diminution. Among the principle are the loss of families by death, or by conforming to the Established Church; the marrying with Protestants, and that general indifference about religion which gains so imperceptably among all ranks of Christians".[3.] That passage indeed, is the main source of the tradition that in the 1780's

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1. Brian Magee The English Recusants (London 1938) pp. 176-197 Hemphill op.cit. p.102

2. W. Maziere Brady, Annals of the Catholic Hierarchy (Rome 1877) pp.169, 212, 263, 301. Brady's figures did not correspond exactly with the original returns, the full texts of which are to be found in J.H. White's "The Vicars Apostolic Returns of 1773", Recusant History 9, pp.205-214. See also T. G. Holt, "A note on some 18th Century statistics", Recusant History 10. pp.3-9. "A further note ..." Recusant History 11, pp.160-1.

3. J. Berington The State and Behaviouf of English Catholics (London 1780) p.116.

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3. J. Berington The State and Behaviouf of English Catholics (London 1780) p.116.

English Catholicism was at its nadir.[1.] Closer examination of the available figures for the period, however, reveals a less sombre picture. Berington identified English Catholicism with the country gentry - "Excepting in the towns, and out of Lancashire, the chief situation of Catholics is in the neighbourhood of the old families of that persuasion. They are the servants, or the children of servants ... who chuse to remain around the old mansion, for the conveniency of prayers, and because they hope to receive favour and assistance from their former masters".[2.] By 1780 the influence of the Catholic country gentry was on the decline, and many rural congregations were in peril,[3.] but the trend was already being offset by a rapid growth in industrialized areas. Of this Berington was vaguely aware,[4.] but he failed to give the fact its full weight. Between 1706 and 1780, for example, the number of Catholics in Staffordshire trebled, despite the virtual disappearance of Catholicism by the latter date in 29 parishes which had reported papists in 1706. The explanation of this discrepancy lies in the movement to the towns: Catholic numbers were increasing outside the sphere of the gentry chapels.[5.] The Northern District, too,

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1. Bernard Ward The Dawn of the Catholic Revival in England (London 1909) p. 8-9.
Hemphill, op.cit. p.103, Holt Recusant History 10, p.3.

2. Berington, op.cit. p.115.

3. J. C. Aveling Northern Catholics (London 1966) p.403.
Marie Rowlands, Birmingham M.A. Thesis "Catholics in Staffordshire", pp.170 ff.

4. Berington op.cit. pp.114-5.

5. Rowlands op.cit. pp.98-114.
Brady, op.cit. p.263, White, op.cit.

provides evidence that the accepted theory of Catholic diminishment needs considerable amendment. The Relief Act of 1791 is usually taken as the turning point in this process: up till that date Catholic numbers decline, after it, with the disappearance of persecution, they increase. In 1773 Bishop Petre reported to Propaganda that his district contained about 22,000 communicants. By 1787 Bishop Gibson estimated that there were 33,685.[1] Again, the hold of the gentry over the Church in the North, particularly in Lancashire, was weaker than elsewhere, for a majority of the Lancashire missions were independent.

In the rest of the country, however, Catholicism was heavily dependent on the largess of Catholic squires. In 1710 an agent of Cardinal Paolucci in England reported that "there is no person of distinction who wishes and is able to keep a Chaplain .. who does not keep one, without the government making any inquiry about it, unless it is for other different reasons".[2] The majority of Catholic chapels therefore, were situated in country houses, and in the south of England, where dependence on "persons of distinction" was greatest, the visitation records of Bishop Challenor contain few missions which were not under gentry patronage.[3]

These were the basic units of the English Church, and within them

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1. Ushaw Library XVIII. D.22.9. Notebook containing Matthew Gibson's Visitation records (= Gibson Visit) f.40. "Computation of Catholics & Missioners Sent to Hilton ... Jan.8th 1787".

2. Public Records Office 31/9/101, Luigi da Cugna to Cardinal Paolucci, quoted in E. N. Williams The 18th Century Constitution, (Cambridge 1960), p.340.

3. Burton, op.cit. I, Ch's ix, xiii.

the spirituality and religious outlook of English Catholics were moulded. The rhythm of English Catholic observance was the rhythm of the country house, and the souls of the faithful bore the imprint of their squire's way of life. In this the Catholic differed little from his neighbours who attended the parish church. Berington stressed the vital part the "example of the Lord" played in "encouraging the lower class", and one is thereby reminded of Sir Roger de Coverley, who, as he is "landlord to the whole congregation ... keeps them in very good order, and will suffer nobody to sleep in it besides himself". [1.] Frequently the holding of a tenancy under a Catholic 'Lord' was conditional on belonging to his congregation. The Vicar of Tisbury, commenting in 1767 on the two hundred papists in his parish, explained to his bishop that "Ld Arundell of Wardour is Ld of the Manor and living near us, and consequently many of the lower class of people depend ... chiefly on him for their subsistence and follow ... his Lordship for Loaves and Fishes".[2.] The phenomenon was not localized. A convert at Biddleston in Northumberland explaining his change of heart observed that "the reason is owing to circumstances"; a mystery which disappears with the appearance shortly afterwards of his son George on the Catholic squire's payroll.[3.] The vicar of Lidbury in Shropshire complained that the local squire "leaves no stones unturned to gainover as many as he can .. If he gets a Protestant servant into his family he seldom fails securing him partly by Meat and Drink, partly by Indulgence

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1. Berington op.cit. p.116, Spectator 112.

2. J. A. Williams Catholic Recusancy in Wiltshire (CRS 1968) pp.82, 191-2.
"Some 18th Century Conversions" in Essex Recusant III, pp.129-133.

3. J. Bossy, "Four Northumbrian Congregations", Recusant History 9. pp.88-119. CRS. XIV. p.292.

and Diversion, & very often by Marriage. Then he settles them in some of his farms or Cottages & for the most part maintains them afterwards". This 'Loaves and Fishes' policy received due encouragement from many of the clergy, and Bishop Walmesley, for example, disapproved of the employment of Protestant servants. [1.]

If the congregation depended on the squire, so too did the priest. The hackneyed anecdote of the missioner, vested and waiting for the squire's permission to begin Mass, reflects a very real and at times heart-breaking master-servant relationship. Where personalities clashed, the missioner invariably suffered. The Jesuit chaplain at Plowden Hall in the late 1750's informed his superior that "Latterly at Plowden (I) was obliged to be a good deal from Home as you y(ou)rself advised me, in order to be out of the Squire's and his Lady's Way, because it was disagreeable to 'em", and Mr. Aldred, chaplain at Little Crosby was obliged to leave the hall for a cottage in the village because the shrewish lady of the manor disliked him. [2,] Aldred fared better than most, since the Squire did not share his wife's antipathy, and saw to it that he was comfortably settled in one of his estate houses, complete with attic chapel, thus bestowing on his priest a measure of independence which many cowed clerics would have envied.

Though the granting of faculties to individual missioners

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1. Clifton, Walmesley to 'Mr. Hussey' via A. Moreau (chaplain) Jan 8/1793 William Price, "Three Jesuits at Plowden Hall" Recusant History 9, pp.169

2. Price op.cit. p.168. Margaret Blundell, Blundell's Diary and Letter Book (Liverpool 1952) pp.78-9.

was the business of the Vicars Apostolic who ruled the Mission, the appointment - and dismissal- of chaplains was the squires' prerogative, and was jealously guarded. This situation inevitably irked the Vicars; Bishop Stonor, a strong character, insisted that the choice should be his, informing one patron "very civilly" that he would "send nobody that would be disagreeable to him, but intimating sufficiently at the same time that the nomination in no way belonged to him". [1.] Such stands, however, were rare, and for the most part the gentry had their way. In 1792 Thomas Weld dismissed John Kirk for his Cisalpine opinions. Weld's mouthpiece on the occasion, the Revd. George Maire, pointed out that Mr. Weld was "of too religious a turn" to send <u>orders</u> to bishops. When he disapproved of one of his chaplain's 'principles' "he intimates as much to their respective Bps, that they may be removed in a canonical manner and by proper authority". [2.] Other patrons waived such niceties and plunged boldly into matters spiritual. The case of the Reverend James Adams, chaplain to a Catholic family at Wimbledon, is instructive. Adams had a strong sense of his spiritual independence from his employers but "as to temporals, they are masters, and may if they please kick me out tomorrow...". Adams' Patroness frequented the fashionable Sardinian Embassy chapel , and her confessor was a Mr. McCarthy, one of the Embassy clergy. This priest

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2. B.A.A. c.1225 Maire to Kirk, Sept. 9th 1792
c.1235, Same to same, December 16th 1792.

1. Rowlands, <u>op.cit</u>. p.22.

she "intruded into the Mission" allowing him to "inspect" the congregation. He began to usurp Adams' place:- "the ignorant - even young boys & girls, are turned over to him for instructions - to him who comes occasionally, at what is called indulgence times ...". McCarthy added insult to injury in 1796 by declaring his intention of presenting two convert members of Adams' congregation to Bishop Douglass for confirmation. Adams had been forbidden by his patroness to instruct the converts - "I am ordered to hold my tongue and these and others depend for their instructions & faith on Women readers & teachers. One of these good women had the insolence to interrogate me whom I approve for confirmation - & I was as humiliatingly told by the Mistress that I was not fit, & that I did not know my subject". He forthwith desptached an agonized letter of complaint to Douglass asking him to refuse McCarthy's candidates, but pleading for secrecy. If Douglass disclosed his letter, he wrote, "I shall be the Victim - & be turned out of all employment, become a vagabond and an idler in the unnoticed throng, and as far as depends on you starve for bread...". [1.] His dilemma, if somewhat more colourful than most, was in its essentials common enough, a fact attested by the request of the Reverend James Peters, on being dismissed by his patron, to be placed in a mission "where the Priest lives out of a family, so as not to receive his salary from a family". [2.]

Such discontent was not universal - Nicholas Blundell and

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1. Archives of the Archbishop of Westminster (= A.A.W.) James Adams to Bishop Douglass, May 23rd 1796.

2. A.A.W., James Peters to Douglass, May 31st, 1796.

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his chaplain were boon companions; together they fished, coursed hares, built eel traps and prolonged their wine after vespers. But a North-country gentleman of modest means, who ate pancakes in his tenants' cottages and took a hand in the hedging and ditching might be less demanding than his more oppulent southern counterparts. Blundell's requirements in a chaplain were modest - "a Man of wit and Conversation, one that can preach well and is willing to take pains amongst poore Catholicks, of which we have a great Many, and one that is of good Humour and will be easy contented with tolerable good Fair..". [1.] But many missioners found themselves employed as servants, not as friends, and the yoke of their servitude galled. Henry Rutter, in durance vile as chaplain to the Silvertops at Minster Acres wrote enviously to a priest on an independent mission, "the sweets of liberty are for persons in your situation, who are happy under your own roofs without fearing the frowns of an angry and imperious Lord". [2.]

The gentry, for their part, kept their chaplains in strict order, and tended to despise them. Joseph Berington remarked in 1780 that "it is the complaint of our gentry, that Priests are rough and unsociable: They would be less so, perhaps, if their patrons were less proud, less ignorant, and less imperious". [3.] The ostensible reason for this contempt was the clergy's lack of polish - "the effect

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1. Blundell's Diary pp.27-80. cf. Spectator 106. It does not appear whether Mr. Aldred "understood a little of backgammon", though Blundell himself played!

2. Upholland, Henry Rutter to Robert Bannister, Nov.19th 1783

3. State and Behaviour, p.163. For an example of "strict order" Ketten Cremer, R.W. "Country neighbourhood". (,1951) p.43.

of ignorance, prejudice & a low contracted college education". The claims of politeness which "'tis said, makes virtue amiable", weighed more heavily with those who moved in 'Society' than with the average missioner, and the diversity of viewpoint produced tensions - "for how can he who is disgusted with the world, who loathes its pleasures & pastimes, is fond of solitude and whose conversation is in heaven, I say how can he laugh & be merry like others enter into their little concerns & interest himself in their foolish ... discourse?". [1.]

The demands of 'Society' were more pressing in the South than in the North, and amidst what Archibsop Matthew called the "polite unenthusiastic Catholicism of the Thames Valley" priests had to be polished or invisible. This was the world of the Petres, the Carylls and the Fermors, the world immortalized in Pope's "Rape of the Lock". The ordered hieratic life pictured in that poem, with its social rituals of cards and courtship, toilet and tea, all "the sacred rites of Pride",found its religious counterpart in the Catholicism of the great houses of the south. In the Petre chapel at Thorndon in Essex the liturgical year unfolded, festival by festival, with splendour and precision, in a setting "suitable to ye decency of the place & expressive of the greatest zeal & religion in the Noble Owner of the Chapple". [2.] Here every day had its prescribed ritual,

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1. Upholland, Rutter to Bannister, Jan.4th 1782

2. Essex Record Office, Chelmsford: Petre Papers, D/DP F185A "Rules to be observed in the Chapple of ye Right Honble Robert Lord Petre at Thornden in Essex, 1741".

every vessel, every vestment, every light, its appointed use. Here on high-days the "Venerable" was exposed "under a rich canopy with lights and many other ornaments"; on Easter day "the best white Vestment, lac'd linnen: the best Chalice & Crewetts, all other things the best in their kind", on All Souls the best black vestment, but the second best chalice. Each day ended with prayers read from a curtained desk, "the long littanies, the Ave Maris Stella & two prayers after it. Then the night prayers in English ... the confiteor then the De profundis. After that the Priest gives his blessing ... then reads the meditation & martyrologue". On Sundays the service was varied by the addition of benediction, on Fridays by "the Prayers of bonae morte." The social, as well as the liturgical niceties were observed - on Christmas night the privilege of saying the first masses belonged to "My Lord's Chaplain"; on Good Fridays "the Priest & most worthy of the laity" crept to the cross within the sanctuary, upon black velvet cushions, and when they had done the crucifix was "carried without the rails" for the devotion of "the people". In such a setting more was required from a priest than good humour. Here was a place for such a priest as Joseph Berington, with his "lofty, aristocratic figure, his intellectual and perhaps proud bearing, as he held up his glass and looked, with a slightly sarcastic and yet playful air, on those around him". [1.]

The regimentation which the lord of the big house could impose upon his dependents touched their lives at every point. A gentleman was considered responsible for the religious welfare of his servants

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1. C.C. Hankin, Life of Mary Anne Schimmelpennick (2nd Ed.London 1858) pp 199-200.

and conformity was often enforced.

Congregations under strict 'seigneurial' supervision presented their children for baptism more promptly and married Protestants less frequently, than those free from such pressure. [1.] The vigilance of many of the gentry in this matter of observance doubtless redounds to their credit, but it was a two edged sword. A change of landlords, Protestant for Catholic, might see the policy of church attendance still in operation, but directed now in favour of the parish church, and even where no such counter-attack was launched the mere absence of seigneurial influence could result in the gradual disappearance of the congregation. Converts "because of circumstances" were likely to relapse into conformity when 'circumstances' changed. [2.] A further defect of the seigneurial congregation was the limit it placed on size. Parsons might complain that the entire tenancy of the Catholic squire were papists, but even a wealthy squire had limits to his servants' roster, and if, as was usual, mixed marriages were frowned upon, congregations tended to be static. In the long term congregations which were allowed to find their own level of observance were to prove hardier, better able to adapt to the conditions of the early nineteenth century. [3.]

The hold of the squire was one of the major influences on the shape of eighteenth century Catholicism. The mind and temper of the

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1. Preston Record Office, Barrow Papers RCCL 2/44, Sermon for 15th December, "But here I call aloud for the serious help & assistance of all parents, masters, Mistresses .. to see that yr children & servants, yr dependents & others committed to yr care attend regularly .. at the chapel".
and see Clifton, Alexander Moreau to Bp. Walmesley, 8th Jan.1793; C. Gerard to Walmesley, March 2nd 1792; and Gother Spiritual Works, (London 1718) 9. "Instructions for Masters", p.11.
Bossy "Four Congregations", Recusant History 9, pp.110-116.

2. Bossy, op.cit. p.97

3. ibid., passim "More CongregationS" Recusant History 10, p.11-29

clergy was another. The priests of the mission were drawn largely from the ranks of the middling and lower gentry, though, as was the case with the clergy of the establishment, the church was considered a respectable lodgement for the younger sons of noble houses such as the Talbots and the Bellasyses.[1.] There were few scholars among them: the conservative training received in colleges like Douay, the "Alma Mater" of most English priests, was aimed rather at producing sound practical missioners. Most English priests would have fitted the President of Douay's description of the Reverend Mr. Reeves, setting out for the mission in 1784: "a zealous, laborious obedient missioner, but is not eloquent, nor can he sing". The average priest's library comprised little more than his 'Dictates' or manuscript Latin notes of the lectures he had heard in College, a few volumes of sermons and devotional works, invariably including those of Gother, a "course of Divinity" by an author such as Collet, an 'Imitation of Christ', one or two of Gother's or Challoner's controversial writings, a volume of Horace or Cicero, a treatise on the care of horses, and perhaps a dictionary.[2.] Their pastoral ideal was not demanding, and carried about it no priestly mystique. John Gother at the beginning of the century listed the obligations of "the pastors of Christ's Church" - the good pastor must labour for the salvation of the

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1. Kirk, Biographies, pp.16, 28-9.
Comment on Reeves, A.A.W. (Douay Vol.1) Gibson to Talbot, Jan.11th,1784

2. Lists in B.A.A., A.439 & A.471
Ushaw Mss. II. 334 c, Ushaw E.C. 249
Dom Hugh Aveling "Education of 18th Century English Monks",
Downside Review lxxix, 1961, 255 pp.135-52 and cf.(Thomas Phillips)
The study of Sacred Literature fully stated and considered, in a discourse to a student in Divinity. (London, 3rd Ed. 1765)
and below, Ch.II.

flock in preaching, Cathechising, and exhortation, he must administer the sacraments to such "as present themselves .. duly prepar'd", not admitting the "Unworthy and .. Notorious Offenders" without "publick proof" of amendment, nor those who have "openly profess'd an aversion to one another". The public offices were to be performed with "Decency, Gravity and Piety", without "Haste, Huddling, and Chopping of Words"; and the "Place of Divine Worship" was to be "kept Decent". Finally the pastor was to banish all "Trading and Covetousness" in holy things; he must not neglect the poor "because they have no offering to make". [1] At the other end of the century Bishop Walmesley welcomed a new missioner to his district and set out the ministerial ideal as he saw it:

"I send you my best wishes and my blessings on your arrival at Hathrope. I hope you'll be carefull and diligent in attending your flock, even those who are at a distance, and to get a knowledge of them as soon as you can. On Sundays and Holy days never fail of giving them due instructions, which in a little time will be, I hope of your own composition. Cathechism in particular must never be omitted ... it will be profitable both to the children and the upgrown people ... avoid idleness ... be assiduous in reading the scriptures and the proper comments upon them, the Moral and Practical treatises of Divinity, and suitable books of spirituality, Such must be your employments ...". [2].

What is striking about both these accounts of the pastoral

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1. Gother, Spiritual Works 12, pp.442-456.
2. Clifton, Walmesley to William Hall, Oct.24th,1780

office is the stress on preaching and teaching, and the comparative absence of attention to the sacraments. "The principal occupation of a priest in Eng(land)" wrote a young missioner in the 1780's "is to catechise, preach &c, & to keep up the dignity of his functions...". [1.] The emphasis was characteristic of the century as a whole, but also reflected the fact that England was mission territory, where "every Parson & Jack-pudding at his own meeting is applauded", and where a priest must therefore "know the language to perfection not to be quite despised". [2.] Sermons, barring those preached in the fashionable London chapels, had to be pitched fairly low, and concern themselves with basics - the commandments, the creed, the sacraments. The sermon book of Thomas Eyre of Stella Hall has survived, and throws a great deal of light on the practice of a painstaking and conscientious missioner. [3.] In December 1775 he launched on a course of sermons on the Decalogue, which lasted until September 1776, with interruptions for the major feasts in between. In October 1776 he embarked on a course of sermons on the sacraments which lasted into 1778! Eyre also had a large collection of sermons paraphrased from authors such as Bourdaloue on 'general' topics - "zeal for the honour of religion", 'The kingdom of Heaven', 'The Judgement of God,' 'Death'. From time to time in place of a sermon for a particular Sunday there is a reference to 'Mr. Gother', and Eyre was clearly in the habit of reading direct from the book on such occasions. This was common practice, and Milner on

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1. Archives of the Venerable English College, Rome. Transcript Diary of John Kirk, f.128v.

2. ibid., f.130v-131.

3. Ushaw Library. Sermons of the Revd. Thomas Eyre (loose leaf Mss book) xviii.D.6.23. Some of the sermons of John Barrow of Claughton are preserved in Preston R.O. - RCLL 2/44. They display the same general characteristics as Eyre's.

his accession to the Middle District in 1803 provided his missioners with a list of suitable material, including Challoner's Meditations and Think Well On't, Gother's Instructions on the Epistles and Gospels, Bishop Hay's works, Alban Butler's Meditations and Discourses, Appleton's Discourses, Bourdaloue's Sermon in translation. [1.] The content of Eyre's discourses is often strikingly in accord with the broad theology of his day. In a sermon for the fourth Sunday after Easter 1778 he listed the "great truths of our religion" - "that there is a God ... infinitely good and infinitely just, & who hates wilful sin ... that there is another life hereafter .. that there is a judgement to come .. a heaven to reward the good, & a Hell for the endless punishment of the wicked". This is the same scheme of 'rewards and punishments' which was the common property of English moral preaching throughout the century. Eyre displays the same emphasis on the moral aspect of religion in a sermon on the Resurrection, which is in fact a harangue on those who live "still in (their) former disorders", and the imagined "great difficulties" of living a resurrection life. "How can I forsake my play & diversion? How can I renounce unto company? how shall I deny my senses their amusements & pleasures? how can I put up with the tediousness of a retired life? how shall I pass my days? . who will give me that strength, who will give me that grace? Why, the same God who is the author of your salvation .. was it for himself that he died?".

As that passage suggests, there is greater austerity in Eyre's sermons than is to be found in most Protestant preaching of the time, and austerity was something of a key-note in English catholic devotion. The religious writings of the period abound with "seeming severities",

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1. John Milner, Letter "To All the Clergy of the Midland district" (London 1803) pp.xxi-xxii.
Upholland, Henry Rutter to Robert Bannister, June 25th, 1782 - "Many seem to think that it is sufficient to read a good book, without being at the trouble of composing a sermon & getting it by heart, & indeed I do not see the necessity of adding to the great number of excellent sermons, that are already made". and cf. Spectator, 106. "Country Clergy .. wasting their Spirits in laborious expositions of their own".

denuhciations of "Games and Visits and Vanity", typified by Eyre's advice to his brother Edward, also a priest, to give up "Smoaking" - "What would a S. Boromee say, were he upon entering your chamber (to) find you at your pipe? It imperceptibly brings on guzzling and tippling most fatal to our cloth". [1.] The Reverend Arthur Vaughan, in his "Triumphs of the Cross, or, Penitent of Egypt", an epic poem intended to reform an age consumed with "the passion for novelty and amusement", summed up the matter:

"How dangerous the path we tread on earth,
When all things round us, from our very birth,
Conspire our ruin!". [2.]

By the end of the century this severity had begun to abate, and the printed sermons of Cisalpine preachers such as James Archer carefully avoided crushing the bruised reed, bringing forward instead "the cheering amenities, the soothing clemencies, the endearing securities" which "scattered .. the Evangelic page". [3.] The earlier severity derived something from the conditions of clerical living. The poverty which affected many a Mr. Quiverful in his country curacy often embittered the soul of the Catholic missioner. A private chaplain might expect to receive £20 a year, and his board; a 'householder' on an independent mission could expect about twice as much, but would have to keep a servant and a horse on this sum. The Chaplain at

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1. See Gother Spiritual Works 16. "The Sinner's Complaints to God". preface; II "Principles and Rules of the Gospel", preface R. Challoner Considerations upon Christian Truths and Christian duties, digested in Meditations for every day in the year. (3rd Ed. London 1767) preface; B.A.A. c.908, T.Eyre to E.Eyre, July 5th, 1787

2. Arthur Vaughan The Triumphs of the Cross, or, Penitent of Egypt (Birmingham 1776) pp.v.65

3. J. Archer Sermons for Festivals and ... Sundays of the Year. (1st Ed.1789, London 1822) E. Jerningham "Select Sermons .. of .. Bossuet .. to which is prefixed an Essay .. on the Eloquence of the pulpit in England"(3rd Ed,London1801)p.xcii(on preaching of Joseph Wilkes)

Plowden Hall in mid-century made do on less than £14., and after necessary expenses had been paid found himself with £4.10.0d. "to keep me in snuff and clothes ".[1.] Towards the end of the century Bishop James Talbot calculated that a missioner keeping one servant and living in a rent free house should manage on £50, and this seems in fact to have been the average income of a great deal of missioners.[2.] Many found themselves unable to make ends meet on this sum. The missioner at Foxcoate in Gloucester had an income of £50, and found himself spending £70.2.6d., while a Jesuit chaplain at Wardour calculated that no missioner could manage on less than £57.15.0d.[3.] By the end of the century matters improved a good deal, and the standard of clerical living in Staffordshire was "gentlemanlike". The clergy there ate well, wore "decent clothes with silver buckles, watches and swords", kept a horse and servant, and entertained each other.[4.] A few favoured souls held golden 'situations' - Joseph Berington received £113.2.10d., of which £100 was an annual gratuity from his patron. Berington was a cultivated and even famous literary figure, and could command his own price. Few missioners were so fortunate.[5.]

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1. Price Recusant History 10,p.170

2. Kirk, op.cit. p.138

3. Printed Broadsheet by James Jenison, S.J. "Oeconomia Clericalis" (Ushaw), A.A.W., J. A. Reeves to Bishop Douglass, May 1796.

4. Rowlands, Recusant History,9p.220

5. A. A. W., Berington to Poynter, Oct.4th 1814 "State of the Catholic Congregation at Buckland, Berks".

Poverty was not the only cross a missioner might have to bear. In areas like Stafford, London and Lancashire the clergy met frequently; in remoter districts of where Catholics were thin-sown, a priest might suffer from acute loneliness, and have as much as twenty or more miles to travel for confession. "It is hard not to have a friend at hand and to be without the least amusment, and a great restraint to do everything in print". [1.] The effects of such isolation were to display themselves in the Cisalpine disputes at the end of the century: most missioners found themselves remote and uninvolved, while those of Staffordshire, London and the North were able to organize and express corporate points of view. [2.] Many priests had the further hardship of a 'riding mission', tending a congregation which might be spread over several hundred square miles. The chaplain at Sawston in Cambridgeshire had a circuit of 160 miles, and was often away visiting his flock for three weeks at a time. [3.] Archbishop Ullathorne recalled his childhood at Scarborough where Mass was celebrated once in six weeks - on the other Sundays one of the more prominent laity led the English prayers before Mass, then the whole congregation read silently the prayers for Mass in the Garden of the Soul "making a sort of spiritual communion"; the proceedings concluded with one

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1. Price, Recusant History 10, p.166.

2. Rowlands, Recusant History, 9 p.221

3. B.A.A., c.1054, James Taylor to Southworth, March 13th 1791. On "Riding Missions" in general see Williams op.cit. pp.115-6. Price, Recusant History 10, pp.167-8

of Archer's sermons. In the afternoon there was a service of psalms and prayers and the children recited their catechism " to the lectors". [1.]

Where the priest was resident, the Sunday pattern was Mass with a sermon 'off book' (impromptu) and Catechism after Vespers in the afternoon. 'Vespers' was often not the canonical office, but a service of prayers, psalms and litanies, usually from Gother's Prayers for Sundays and Festivals. These were considered "more satisfactory and more comfortable to the people, who then can join with them". [2.] Many priests were forced to catechise immediately after Mass, since they could not get congregations for evening service, [3.] and even so, Eyre complained of "crowds hastening with impatience out of the chapel the very moment Mass is ended; & this for fear lest they hear & be present at Catechism". [4.] Where distance or other good reason prevented a family from attending afternoon service it was considered that "the evening must be sanctified at home; and that three-quarters of an hour is not too much for so important a purpose". [5.]

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1. Autobiography of Archbishop Ullathorne, (2nd Ed., London n.d.) pp.13-14.

2. A.A.W., Walmesley to Douglass May 24th,1796. Blundell's Diary p.80. Gother, Spiritual Works, 13-15. "Prayers for Sundays and Festivals".

3. Rowlands Recusant History 10,p.67
Preston Barrow Papers RCCl 2/44 (loose sheet of 'notices' complaining of poor attendance at afternoon prayers)

4. Eyre's Sermon Book, 4th Sunday after Easter, 1778

5. (Berington) Gother's Prayers for Sundays and Festivals adapted to the use of private Families (Wolverhampton 1800) pp.i-vii.

The congregation a missioner served might in themselves be not the least of his burdens, and many a missioner must have found himself marooned in a remote parish and surrounded by the illiterate poor. Gother's instructions for 'such as cannot Read, or have not Time to pray", Father Mannock's thesis "Modus audiendi Missam utilissimus Rusticis que legere non possunt, est recitare Rosarium B.M. Virginis", and the Benedictine John Fisher's complaint of the congregation at Holme-on-Spalding-Moor - "mean and indig ent as to worldly substance; illiterate and ignorant as to religion notwithstanding the pains taken by my predecessor ... and such as I found them, such I believe I shall leave them.." - all these tell the same story.[1.] Yet even here was a matter for hope. Thomas Gabb found the ignorance of the local people encouraging, for the parson was disliked by them on account of his lengthy and inaudible sermons, and their ignorance of religion meant they had no prejudices.[2.] And, indeed, discouraging as isolation among the unlettered poor might be, it was the lot of the parson equally with the missioner, and no harder to bear.

Whatever burdens the missioner had to endure, his bishop was not one of them. The Vicars were not bishops-in-ordinary, and the English Mission was not subject to normal canonical discipline. The Vicars therefore had little control over the movements of their

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1. J. C. Aveling 'Catholic Recusants of the West Riding' in Proceedings of the Leeds Philosophical and Literary Society, vol. x pt.vi, p.266. Gother, Spiritual Works, 12. pp.432 ff.

2. A.A.W., Gabb to Douglass, July 3rd 1796.

clergy, at least those who held chaplaincies to the gentry, for the laity held the purse-strings. Indeed, the bishops were frequently uncertain how many priests were in their districts. Faculties had to be granted by the Vicar, but this was usually a matter of form, and only notorious immorality or the request of a patron could normally budge a missioner. Bishop Hornyold laboured for three years to dislodge Pierce Parry, the missioner at Oscott; Parry was supported by the congregation and the lay financial trustee, and the bishop in the end gave in. Hornyold had in fact attempted to avoid consecration as Bishop, giving as the reason "the scanty respect accorded to the Bishops by their clergy".[1] The uncertainty of the limits of the Vicars' authority over the regular clergy was an even greater cause of contention. Throughout the century the Vicars and the Regulars sparred over such matters as the granting and recalling of faculties: the matter was decided by Rome in favour of the Vicars in 1753, but in practice the independence of the Orders continued, and was even countenanced by the Bishops themselves.[2] Even the bishop's pastoral office brought him comparatively infrequently into contact with his clergy - the Vicars had vast areas to cover in their visitation and confirmation tours, and although confirmations, given the circumstances, were surprisingly frequent, a missioner could count

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1. Rowlands "Catholics in Staffordshire" pp.12,24-5.
   Dawn I, pp.30-1.

2. Burton, Challenor I pp.245-269, 306-324.
   Williams, op.cit.p.148

on seeing his bishop, if he lived in the country, once every three or four years. [1].

The comparative lack of contact between the Vicars and their priests, and the particular circumstances which governed the appointment of missioners help to explain the readiness of perfectly orthodox and well-intentioned priests to go their own way in the Cisalpine disputes at the end of the century. The violence and acrimony of ultra-orthodox clergy in the Northern District against Bishop Gibson's plans for a seminary in his district led him to accuse them of presbyterianism, but was simply a manifestation of the same phenomenon, and proof positive that it was not confined to innovators and schismatics. [2]. The Vicars themselves laboured under considerable difficulties. Their districts were vast, and they laboured under the necessity of pleasing the Gentry who financed the mission, and the clergy themselves who could be extremely vocal if hardly done by, combined with the delicate business of keeping the peace with the Regulars. All these circumstances militated against efficiency, and the Vicars' records give an impression of government by 'rule of thumb'. For the most part the combination of easy-going compromise and Heath-Robinson improvisation kept the groaning machinery

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1. Rowlands Recusant History 10, p.68. Gibson, Visit, f.6. Confirmation tours could be perilous occasions: Bishop Gibson was laid up for a month at Warrington with gout, and Bishop Berington's death was hastened by a chill caught in a damp bed on a visitation tour! - Visit f.23, Kirk, op.cit. p.16.

2. Milburn, op.cit. pp.64 ff.

of the mission running: occasionally disasters occurred. One example must suffice. In the late 1770's, an Irish priest named Doran arrived in London from Cadiz, carrying a letter of introduction to Bishop Challoner from an English merchant in Spain, one Mr. Tucker. Tucker was a considerable benefactor of the London Catholic poor, and on his recommendation Challoner gave Doran faculties for his district, ignoring the canon which required on such occasions a commendatory letter from the priest's own bishop. His confidence was misplaced, for after attempting to seduce one of his penitents, Doran absconded with a rich widow, whom he subsequently married. The Bishops' agent in Rome, Christopher Stonor, took the opportunity of criticizing Challoner for disregarding the canons in deference to Tucker. "A more punctual adhesion to that wholesome regulation might have exempted (Doran) from falling into the precipice, spared the public such a scandal, and you a great deal of trouble". [1.]

There remains one further strand in the pattern of eighteenth century Catholicism to be discussed. The history of post-reformation English Catholicism is a history of violent internecine

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1. Southwark Cathedral archives, Stonor's Roman Agency, ff.324-335,
A.A.W., Stonor to Bp. Talbot, March 26th, 1782.
Kirk, Biographies, p.65. On secular/regular loyalties in general, Hemphill op.cit.

war. The fight for control of the English Colleges abroad, the Wisbech Stirs, the quarrels over the Oath of Allegiance of 1606, the Chapter disputes - these were the bitter heritage of English Catholicism, and the enmity between Secular and Regular, between 'Clergy' and Jesuits, soured the otherwise heroic story of the Recusant church of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The eighteenth century itself witnessed a prolongation of those disputes in the quarrel over jurisdiction which officially ended in 1753. This dispute, by comparison with the earlier quarrels, was a minor affair, but the bitterness between seculars and regulars which remained was all-pervasive, and the traditional unspoken allegiances and attitudes of the opposing parties survived. No Catholic in England escaped untouched, whether it was bishop Challoner striving to thwart his brother Walmesley in his application for a Benedictine coadjutor, [1.] or Christopher Stonor informing Bishop Talbot that the Jesuits were "more attached to their society than to their Religion". [2.] These party loyalties ran deep, and overode all other ties. Andrew Gifford, a Chapter man, was evicted from a 'Clergy' chapel in London in 1686 by 'the Jesuits'; he became one of James II's Catholic fellows of Magdalen, and at the Revolution was once more sent on his travels. "I compared these two passages together", he wrote, "my being turned out of Lime Street House by the Jesuits, and out of Magdalen College by the Protestant Parsons, and I must

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1. Kirk, op.cit. p.243.
2. A. A. W., Stonor to Talbot, Nov.23rd, 1784.

needs do justice to ... those of Magdalen College, that I was dismissed that place with much more civility and much less reproach than what I found at my dismissal from Lime House...". [1.]

Out of these disputes had emerged a secular tradition, rarely given explicit formulation, but with clearly recognizable general emphases. Of this tradition the "old Chapter" was the guardian. The seculars saw themselves as the native English clergy, the rightful pastors of the flock; the regulars, and especially the Jesuits, were interlopers and hirelings. The great hope of the Chapter was the appointment of Bishops-in-Ordinary, who would vindicate the "rights of the clergy" against the Regulars. The seculars' attitude to the papacy was ambivalent. On the one hand, as Catholics, they recognized the Pope as the "Center of Church Unity", and "only refuge in composing our wavering Ideas". [2.] On the other, as combatants against the 'anarchy' and 'presbyterianism' of the Jesuits, they believed that the 'Court of Rome' had all too often supported the enemies of Episcopal government in England, in return for their support of Papal pretensions. During the Commonwealth the extremist elements among the secular Clergy had schemed to have a government-sanctioned Hierarchy introduced, and all Jesuits deported, and some were prepared to proceed even at the cost of breach with Rome. [3.] Few would have gone so far,

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1. Kirk, op.cit.p.99

2. Charles Dodd (vere Hugh Tootell) The Secret Policy of the English Society of Jesus .. against the clergy (London 1715)p.208

3. For a full account Malcolm Hay The Jesuits and the Popish Plot (London 1934) pp.31-67. R. Pugh, Blackloe's Cabal discovered (London 1680) and Ch.II. below.

but eminent Secular clergy could talk contemptuously of those who have "sent to Rome for His Holiness Bulls to beget English Calves", and of priests who "will never dare to go to the close-stool without a brieve from Rome". [1.] This hostility to the Orders, and obliquely to the 'Court' if not the 'See' of Rome, survived in a moderated form well into the eighteenth century, in such books as Dodd's Church History. [2.] For the most part it was dormant, emerging in flashes in jurisdictional quarrels or jibes at "the padri". Nevertheless it remained, and ensured that the English clergy thought in terms of an English Church with its own ways, in which Rome played no large part; its survival helps explain the extent of support for the Cisalpine party in the disputes at the end of the century. It had another effect. The 'busiest' and, as time erased the rumour of heterodoxy and foul-dealing, the most revered of the seventeenth century capitulars, were men like Thomas White (alias Blackloe). John Sergeant, and Henry Holden. In their political dealings with the English government these men had sought to establish the notion of a loyal English Catholic church, English in allegiance, and English in thought. They strove to present a Catholicism shorn of unnecessary alien factors. "... there be divers Schismaticks" wrote Holden, "who are intangled in those unfortunate chaines, because they do not discern our revealed and Catholic truths, from the opinions of our divines .. Nor likewise, our Divine and Apostolical institutions, from the Ecclesiastical constitutions of

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1. Hay, op.cit. pp.41-2.

2. C. Dodd, The Church History of England from 1500 to 1688, chiefly with regard to Catholicks (Brussels (false imprint)), 1737-42.

Councils and Popes. Yea .. they imagime they are bound to maintain .. some small abuses .. which are crept into the church, through the carelessness of Bishops, and negligence of Pastors...".[1.] His solution was to produce an Analysis of Divine Faith which jettisoned all but the essentials, abandoning monkish disputation or Jesuitical wrangling. "No man" wrote Dodd "has taken more pains, and been more successful, than Doctor Holden, in seperating the approved tenets of the church from the superstructure of school divines...".[2.] The emphasis persisted, and a young missioner in 1780 was warned that in discussing religion, he would have to distinguish between 'doctrine' and 'pious life'.[3.] The austere, biblical and calm devotional tradition canonized in the works of the convert-Dissenter Gother, so close in language and in thought to the mainstream of English religion, gave a context for such attitudes. Eirenical and 'minimalist', the tradition once again helps explain the countenance later given to Cisalpinism by many orthodox clergy.

The acid test of the 'Englishness' of Catholicism was its acceptance by the English. The accounts of Bishop Giffard "under a persecution which obliges me to scamper about and often change lodgings and seek hiding-holes",[5.] at the beginning of the

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1. Hay, loc.cit. Henry Holden "The Analysis of Divine Faith, or two treatises .. of Christian Belief..(Paris 1658) Epistle to the reader.

2. Dodd, Church History III, p.298

3. Rowlands, "Catholics in Staffordshire", p.35.

4. On Gother's relationship to the English religious tradition see the forthcoming paper (Recusant History) of Sister Marion Francis, I.B.V.M., "John Gother".

5. Hemphill, op,cit. pp.45-49

century, and of the trials of Bishop Talbot at the end[1.] give a picture of harrassed church which is quite out of keeping with the available evidence. Persecution was inconsistent with the Quita non movenda policy of the government during the first half of the century, and the failure of Catholics to support the '45 demonstrated that Catholicism held no political threat. Despite the formidable list of laws in force against Catholics, therefore,[2.] the authorities were content to let the papists alone. The 'Papist tax' of 1723 was the last government move against Catholics as a body: at a local level the penal statutes were already well advanced towards obsolescence. The case of William Bridges, Vicar of Kippax in the York Diocese, admirably illustrates the relationship between mission and Church. Bridges had been instituted to his living in December 1731: early in 1733 he resigned, "with .. a design of turning Rom: Catholick"; Bishop Williams, the Northern Vicar Apostolic was blamed for the 'perversion', and the irritated authorities promptly summonsed a number of Catholic gentry under the recusancy statutes. Sir Edward Gascoigne and Viscount Fauconberg immediately approached the Archbishop, who made clear his policy on these matters. "It is not my intention" he wrote, "to break in upon ye tacit Conivance which ye Roman Catholicks by his Majesties great lenity enjoy .. in the private

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1. James Barnard The Life of.. Richard Challoner D.D. (London 1784) pp.155 ff.

2. See The Case of the English Catholic Dissenters (London 1789) and Williams, op.cit. pp.1-68.

exercise of their Religion. Nor is it my principle .. to be greivous to any one, who behaves quietly & peacably ... on the account of His Opinions merely Religious. But it must not be expected from me that I shou'd tamely suffer my Flock to be perverted from their Religion or Allegiance by the busy Zealots of the Romish church who ungratefully & licentiously employ themselves in those perversions". Against these "Hot ones" the Archbishop was determined to act, but "Such of 'em as are reasonable and peacable will find me so too & will for my part find the Penal Act as harmless as they can wish". [1.] The storm therefore blew over, and after a few months tactful absence Bishop Williams was able to carry on with his normal activities. The case is revealing in many ways. The authorities were prepared to turn a blind eye to Catholic activities so long as those activities did not include proselytising: the Catholic gentry were prepared to accept toleration on those terms. Sir Edward Gascoigne, on whose estates Bishop Williams lived, considered that the resentment against Williams would have been "highly deserved" had he "sought to buissye himself with any such Concerns; for .. I think we shou'd all be most entirely undeserving ye lenity we are treated with by ye Government, -cd we be capable of attempting to disturb it in any way whatever". Gascoigne had taxed Williams with the conversion on first hearing it, and was relieved to find he had nothing to do with it". [2.] The authorities and

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1. CRS 32 pp.381-388

2. ibid., p.382

the Catholics, therefore, recognised the principle Cuius regio, ejus religio: a man's tennants were his affair, but poaching among "the better sort" was not allowed. The gentry, consequently, were expected, and willing, to act as a brake on "busy" chaplains. So in 1765, Mr. Cholmley of Brandsby was lectured by the Archbishop of York on "the prudence necessary in papists", and in the same year, after a similar interview, Sir Henry Lawson had his over-zealous chaplain "withdrawn" by his Jesuit superiors. [1.]

Meetings with Archbishops were rare, and the encounter between Church and Mission was more often enacted between Parson and Priest, or Parson and squire. And here again, the overall impression is one of non-agression. The Visitation returns of papists contain occasional agonized laments from incumbents of the increase of popery in their parishes, but it must be remembered that a parson with a hundred or so papists in his parish might well feel that the expression of some such sentiment would be expected by the Archdeacon and the Bishop.[2.] Canon Ollard's comments on the York diocese returns for 1747 apply to the country as a whole. "One fact these returns make crystal clear: the English Clergy were not anxious to call attention to their Roman Catholic brethren. In answer to Archbishop Herring's searching questions the parochial clergy for the most part preserve a very discreet silence. There are but three exceptions:

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1. Aveling Northern Catholics, p.379 , and see B.A.A., c.363 for a criticism of Alban Butler as "too forward in conversions".

2. Williams, op,cit. p.82

at Brandsby and at Broughton-in-Airedale where the incumbents are at odds with their Roman Catholic squires over tithe and the like, and at Allendale where the curate complains that a steward at the lead mines is "industrious to dispense popish books". For the rest, the clergy in this matter seem usually to have put a telescope to their blind eye, consequently the names of but twelve Catholic 'teachers' are reported to the Archbishop, though in fact there were at least 48 Roman Catholic priests then at work in the diocese". [1.] A few parsons might even have shared William Cole's reaction to the Bishop of Lincoln's enquiry about the numbers of Papists in his parish in 1767. "Why don't the Bps enquire after the growth of Dissenters of multifarious Denominations? After Atheists, Deists & Libertines, surely these are more dangerous to our constitution & Christianity in General than the Papists, whose Tenets are Submission to Government & Order. Great pity it is the factious Element against them is not true, & that they actually did increase, that they might be a Ballance against them". [2.]

At any rate the eighteenth century papist lived in a society which recognised his existence, and for the most part

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1. Ollard and Walker, Archbishop Herring's Visitation Returns 1743. (Yorkshire Archeological Society 1928-31) IV, p.191 For similar findings for other diocese see Williams, op.cit. pp.81-83; Rowlands "Catholics in Staffordshire" pp.98-114, Mary Ransome The State of the Bishopric of Worcester 1782-1808 (Worcester Historical Society 1968) p.17

2. The Blecheley Diary of Rev. William Cole (London 1931) pp.253-4.

accepted it. Protestant parsons move through the pages of Nicholas Blundell's diary as easily as Catholic priests, and it was not uncommon for the missioner and the Parson to dine together amicably.[1.] This state of easy familiarity made compromise over religious issues possible; Catholics often had their own burial area in the churchyard where Catholic funerals might be held without secrecy, with the assistance of bell-ringers and sexton, and the connivance of the parson.[2.] At the end of the century it became possible for Catholics to open their own burial grounds, but this could result in friction with the local incumbent, who would thus be deprived of internment fees. In 1806 a dispute of this sort occured between Henry Carter, missioner at Newsham, and the local parson, Joshua Southward, when Carter opened a graveyard near his chapel. Southward, however, objected only to the loss of cash, and was prepared to ignore the graveyard if Carter saw to it that he received his legal fees for Catholic burials.[3.] For the most part Catholics were careful to avoid such conflicts of interest and to conciliate the local parson. Papists at Crathorne in the Archdeanery of Cleveland seem to have offset several substantial debts incurred by their Rector, Mr. Pearson, who was duly cited to the Archdeacon by a zealous anti-catholic curate

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1. Blundell's Diary, p.77-81. Cole's Diary 5, 16,113,126. Ketton Cremer, op.cit. p.

2. Rowlands Recusant History 10, p.68

3. J. Gillow The Haydock Papers, p.75

as being "entirely at their (the Catholics) command". [1.] Such direct financial ties must have been rare, but the common bonds of good-neighbourliness were in their way equally effective.

For their part, Catholics valued their links with their Protestant neighbours, and sought to foster them. 'Busy' priests were not approved of, and the tendency was to minimize even doctrinal differences. One Northern squire declared that if two gentlemen, Catholic and Protestant, sat down to discuss religion rationally, "except the doctrine of the Infallibility and Authority of the Church in matters of faith ... I am certain (for I have often had experience of it) that the differences between 'em will be the splitting of a hair. But the Ecclesiasticks on both sides ... instead of charitably healing, endeavour to widen differences ..". [2.] In fact many "Ecclesiasticks" were as anxious to avoid confrontations and "widening differences" as the laity. Amicable discussions sometimes took place between Mr. Aldred at Little Crosby and his friend Parson Wairing, but these would be sunk in a good dinner at the Hall; serious differences were avoided. The missioner at Mowbreck in the late 1740's declined a"publick dispute" with the Vicar of Kirkham. "Such ecclesiastical wars rather widen the breach between us, than heal our divisions... and indeed this general reason may

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1. CRS.32 pp.371-378
2. Aveling, West Riding, p.263

be given for it. That as the two combatants meet with a fiery resolution of not retreating even a foot from each other, they strip themselves, not of their Cloaths but of their reason". [1] Where 'ecclesiasticks' were backward in this matter, the gentry were liable to take matters into their own hands. The Jesuit chaplains, Protestant clergy, and the gentry in the neighbourhood of Sephton in Lancashire were in the habit of meeting together for bowls and good conversation. In 1715 the Jesuit superior decided that such fraternization with the enemy must stop, and a number of Jesuits withdrew from the meetings. Squire Blundell was enraged, and wrote to the superior - ".. this refusal of their usuall company I know is taken very henously, & not without Reason especially by some Parsons who have often been checked for being so conversant with some of yours, and have notwithstanding those Rebukes still desired their Company because they find them Men of Parts, good Company and Conversation .... but now to refraine their Company at this Juncture, they say is merely because the Priests must caball amongst themselves and at the least prospect of change contemn those who wish them well & have suffr'd Reproach for speaking well of them ... And if these Sivell Parsons (in whose power it was to doe a diskindness) be exasperated, I am afraid it may be of ill Consequence". Blundell had no time for the "doting old

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Devotes who would have them spend their time like Superan-
uated Missioners and have no conversation with any but such
as come to their chambers...". [1.] Gentry fraternization
with Protestants tended to stop short of inter-marriage, but
where they were free from 'seigneurial' pressures, the "poorer-
sort" had no such reservations, and the registers of Catholic
missions abound in records of such unions. Joseph Berington
considered that they led to the lapse of the Catholic parties,
and some strict missioners opposed all such alliances. Robert
Bannister informed Catholics who were courting Protestants to
"come no more to me, nor look for any sacraments from me, unless
they desist immediately from such connections". [2.] Such
rigidity was uncommon, and Bishop Stonor's view that mixed
marriages were "sometimes advisable, sometimes allowable and
in many cases tolerable" seems to have been widely accepted. [3.]
Moreover, the indications are that such marriages, far from
endangering the faith of the Catholic party, were a positive
means of expansion for the Catholic community. The Reverend
Monox Harvey, active successively in Oxfordshire, London and
Yorkshire in mid-century, was remarkably successful in turning
mixed marriage to this end. He seems to have insisted as a
matter of course on a promise "that all children should be

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1. J.J. Bagley (editor) The Great Diurnal of Nicholas Blundell (Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire 1968-1970) II, p.286 Blundell to Fr. Babthorpe S.J., June 14th, 1715.

2. Berington State and Behaviour, p.116.
P. Doyle "English Missionary Life in the 18th Century", Upholland Magazine 1971, p.45. Anthony Clough resigned his post as chaplain at Chillington because the young squire married a Protestant - Kirk, op.cit.p.49

3. Rowlands, Recusant History 10, p.68

brought up Roman Catholicks" and that the Protestant partner would give "no trouble or Molestation" to his or her spouse in the exercise of their religion.[1] Such promises, surprisingly, seem to have been common, and so too were "marriage conversions"; the practice of mixed marriage points both to the absence of the 'ghetto' mentality among ordinary Catholics, and to the future lines of expansion in 'non-seigneurial' congregations.[2]

The picture which has been presented of the eighteenth century Catholic community is that of a religious minority with its own strongly individual characteristics and traditions, yet by no means inturned; a church recognized, tolerated, and on occasion protected by its Protestant neighbours. It remained, however a community proscribed by law, and it would be false to suggest that this proscription did not carry with it a great deal of hardship. Throughout the century Catholic landowners complained of the burden of double land-tax. Certainly by the end of the century the tax assessments (which had remained static) were so light that some gentlemen considered that the reassessment of land which would follow legal relief might leave Catholics worse off.[3] Catholic disabilities were certainly not 'ruinous', but the extra tax-burden, especially in war-years when the standard rate was raised, could seriously embarrass a family's finances.[4]

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1. CRS 14, pp.332-333.

2. Rowlands, Recusant History 10, p.68. Bossy, Recusant History,9. pp.112-116.

3. Ushaw College History (Mss) 224, "Mr. M. Tunstall's ... answer to the Catholic Committee, April, 1787

4. On this question in general see Williams, op.cit.pp.52 ff.

This was an affliction which only the gentry experienced directly, and the same is true of most of the restrictions the laws placed on papists. The ban which prevented a Catholic from taking silk, holding an Army commission or sitting in Parliament meant nothing to the farm labourers or nail makers of Wardour and Wolverhampton: it meant much to gentlemen anxious to live the life of a gentleman to the full. For a large part of the century even the gentry were content to live in retirement, enjoying the goodwill of their neighbours and the "mild usage of the government". But that goodwill and mild usage, while it might satisfy the missioner and his congregation, inevitably whetted the appetite of the squire. The tacit acceptance and toleration of Catholics was entirely unofficial, a matter of slumbering laws and official connivance. Beyond the round of daily life the connivance ended; at the level of advancement in public office the ambitious Catholic felt his disadvantage. The missioner, inheritor of a devotional tradition which depreciated the 'Vanity' of society, could scarcely appreciate how galling such deprivation might be. "I know the World to be corrupt" wrote John Gother at the beginning of the century, "and its ways generally Perverse, and have so mean an opinion of it, that had I no other Motive, my only disagreeing with it would be an argument of my being in the right". [1] The decline of the Catholic gentry towards the end of the century was evidence that they had no such 'mean opinion' of the 'World'.

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1. Gother, Spiritual Works, I, p.A3.

They had grown tired of the liberty of their parishes, and would walk abroad. 'Security in Obscurity' was a motto which appealed to Churchmen content with the exercise of their religion, and fearful of the World, the Flesh and the Devil; it did not satisfy those who desired a Gentleman's share of what the world had to offer.[1.]

Papists for long had studied to be quiet: as the end of the century approached the leisurely and conservative flow of Catholic life was stirred by new currents, a quickening of pace, that was to issue in the disputes which divided the Catholic community in the years after the First Relief Act. To those stirrings we must now turn.

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1. Berington, State and Behaviour, pp.vi-vii

Joseph Berington and the English Catholic

Cisalpine movement

1772 - 1803

Chapter II. ENLIGHTENMENT

"... all those Moderns, Men of steady Sense,
Esteem'd for learning, and for Eloquence". 1.

(I)

For all their mistrust of the world, the 18th century had not left the Catholics untouched, and the Papists of 1780 were not as their fathers in the reign of James II. Perhaps the most obvious change was in political allegiance. "I shall never" wrote a Catholic in 1718, "take the least step that may .. have the appearance of a Whiggish Papist, whom I shall always abhor as the most notorious villains". [2.] Notorious villains they became almost to a man, for by the end of the century few were still to be found ".. intoxicated with the fumes of Jacobitism", [3.] and many had "embraced the principles of that party which is thought to understand best the true spirit of the constitution. They became Whigs". [4.]

The change was part of a wider reorientation. The English Catholics were becoming more English. The abatement of persecution had drawn them closer to the society in which they lived, and made further contact with that society more desirable. For in the liberal atmosphere of the late 18th century, Emancipation could at last be mooted: and if it could only be impressed on the nation that a man might be a Papist and a loyal Briton too, relief could not be long delayed. But Catholics were suspected of divided allegiance, - to the temporal power of the papacy, to Spain, to France - anywhere rather than to England's Protestant crown. And so xenophobia became the order of the day. The divinity students at Douay tormented their French masters, who were, after all, French, and Charles Butler, in his dotage, remem-

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1. John Pomfret "The Choice" (Oxford Book of 18th Century verse)

2. Roger Strickland to the Duke of Mar., 26th October 1718. Call Stuard MSS., vii, p440. cited by Matthew. "Catholicism in England 1535-1935" (London 1936),p.130. See also Joseph Berington's "State and Behaviour of English Catholics from the Reformation to the present day" (London 1780), p.83.

3. Berington, op.cit. p.134

4. Berington: "Rights of Dissenters from the Established Church" (1789), p.9.

bered that his schoolfellows had never for a moment doubted the ".. salutary and incontravertible truth that one Englishman can, any day, beat two Frenchmen". [1.] The comparative isolation of English Catholicism from Continental influence allowed the extension of this nationalism into religious thought and worship. The bedrock devotion of the recusant church was sober, scriptural, even, some thought, dry; it lacked any suggestion of extravagance. Such a tradition had its doctrinal consequences, and the works of the century's most popular spiritual writer, John Gother, reveal, for example, that English Catholics rarely addressed the saints directly, and thought of them as examplars rather than intercessors. The stress is characteristic, and the Old Catholic outlook may be summed up in Gother's maxim, "All that is immoderate .. is not allowed". [2.]

Their Englishness was, characteristically, conservative. Though they were whigs they were Burkite whigs, and "tended to Government". They had changed slowly, and would not willingly change again. "Innovations" wrote John Warmoll in 1791, "are always dangerous." The missioner at Aughton in the Northern district thought he had good biblical warrant for his love of the "old ways". "Our saviour says 'no man drinking old wine calls for new, for the old is better', and so say I". [3.] So said a good

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1. Joseph Berington to Mrs. Bodenham, November 20th,1785. Berington Papers, Worcester County Record office. 705:24/1523. Charles Butler "Reminiscences", 3rd Ed.(1822), p.10.

2. John Gother, "Spiritual Works", (London 1718), vol.xi, p.20.

3. Simon Bordley in 1789 - Ushaw College Archives III,279, cited by Basil Hemphill in "Early Vicars Apostolic of England (London 1954) p.94. Warmoll's remark is in a letter to R. Southworth, 7th March 1791, in B.A.A.C., 1037.

many Catholics in the last years of the century, and their rapport with the age was pursued with caution. Many Catholic gentlemen, like Geoffrey Haredale in 'Barnaby Rudge' preferred to avoid public notice as much as possible, living lives of seclusion, their time passed in the cultivation of hobby-horses - the growing of orchids, the trimming of their timber, or the study of antiquities. [1]. Their caution was not without wisdom. The poet Cowper recorded in 1784 the "gross insults" offered to his neighbours the Throckmortons, "on account of their religion", and the Gordon riots demonstrated that enlightenment in matters of toleration was by no means universal. [2].

But the age of Bolingbroke and Hume, of Wilkes and Tom Paine adversely affected all sects and churches in England, and the national decline into religious indifference or total apostasy was reflected even within the closed ranks of Roman Catholicism. The century preceding Emancipation was notoriously one of Popish diminishment; the roll-call of the 'better sort' who abandoned the faith of their fathers was, to contemporary Catholics, a depressing reminder that in an age of rational piety, of sense and moderation, their dwindling church had no longer even the confessor's or martyr's crown to compensate for the deprivation of civil liberties, or the stifling of just ambitions. [3]. Many such apostasies had little or nothing to do with conscience or conviction,

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1. John Nichols, "Illustrations of the Literary History of the 18th Century". (1817-1858) (i) pp.327-30.
William Hayley "Life of Cowper" (Chichester 1803-4) (ii) p.310.

2. Letters of William Cowper (ed.1904) (ii) p.206. Cowper to John Newton, May 10th 1789.

3. Joseph Berington: "State and Behaviour" p.114 ff. John Milner "Supplementary Memoirs of the English Catholics" (London, 1820) p.44.
Hemphill: op.cit. pp.83-89.

for English Catholics had their share of tepid believers and unscrupulous careerists. They had too, their rakes and tear-aways, and a Catholic might be invited to join the club of enlightened spirits known as the "Julians", in memory of that patron saint of apostates, or to enrol among the bucks who in the late 1760's formed a sort of Hell-fire club, leagued under oath to forfeit a hundred pounds for the womanish offence of attendance at the sacrament of penance. [1.]

Such manifestations of spiritual emancipation, however, set the influence of the age of reason at its lowest and least reputable; there were clearer indications of the growth of true "Enlightenment." Seventeenth century English Catholicism had been a stern and penitential thing, and even the easy age of the Hanovers did not dispel that rigorist ethos. A year after the accession of the first George, Charles Dodd argued that it was that very severity, those "austere marks of Contrition" so characteristic of English Catholic devotion, which lent a spurious plausibility to the charges of Jansenism then being levelled against the secular clergy. [2.] At the other end of the century, Alban Butler's gloomy discourses on the dangers of the World, and on proper Christian contempt for its Vanities, demonstrated that the

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1. A. A. W. Bishop Douglass' Diary (= D.D.) August 4th, 1795. See Stromberg, "Religious Liberalism in 18th Century England" (Oxford 1954), p.4. and footnote.

2. Charles Dodd: "The Secret Policy of the English Society of Jesus" (London, 1715), p.255, 263-264.

spirit was not dead.[1] But by mid century orthodox apologists in Catholic France were arguing with the Abbe Pluche, that the world was made by God for man's good pleasure; Christians of every stamp ratified the poet Thompson's:

> "..... Man superior walks
> Amid the glad creation ..... "[2]

and even Catholic Englishmen were inclined to look askance at a spirituality so harsh, so unsociable, so life-denying. Consider the attitude to celibacy of the once Catholic poet, Edward Jerningham:-

> "A sluggish, shard-born form, with dust oe'spread:
> Dead to the bliss that social life bestows,
> Dead to the bliss that from affection flows,
> Dead to the blandishments of female power."[3]

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1. Alban Butler: "Meditations and Discourses on the Sublime Truths and Important Duties of Christianity". (Posthumously printed London 1791) pp.331-344.-"On the Dangers of the World", pp.344-353. -"On the Contempt of the World".

> "O traitor world, thou promisest all good, and givest all all evils; thou promisest life, and givest death; thou promisest joy, and givest sorrow; thou promisest rest and behold trouble and disturbance.. O! Wert thou exposed in thy true colours". (p.345)
> " Happy are they .. who .. have fled from the commerce of the world, by renouncing it, and hiding themselves in monastries and deserts ..." (p.347)

2. Abbe N. Pluche: "Le Spectacle de la Nature" (Paris, 1732)
R. R. Palmer "Catholics and Unbelievers in 18th Century France" (Princeton 1939, paper), Ch.5.
James Thompson, "Spring" , 11.170-I (in Poetical Works, Oxford 1951).

3. Edward Jerningham, "Poems", (London 1786) 2 vols, (ii), p.107.

Admittedly, the testimony of an apostate poet could hardly be accepted, were it not amply confirmed elsewhere. In 1780, Joseph Berington complained of the austerity of the English Catholic clergy, equating it with boorishness, "unpleasant manners in society", and illiteracy: in the same decade the Catholic traveller Henry Swinburne related with disgust the aescetical excesses of European saints, whose "zeal and fasting" were calculated only to "heat the imagination" and obscure the mind. [1.] They were voicing a Catholic version of the century's fear of Enthusiasm and excess, a theme taken up in the priest Alexander Geddes' poem, "Sophronia".

"Let sophists wrangle, still to me 'tis clear,
We were not made to be unhappy here.
For though Religion bids us to refrain
From lawless pleasures and our passions rein,
She never bids our passions to destroy
Or want enjoyments that we should enjoy". [2.]

The horror of the Bishop of Norwich on having mistakenly delivered to his door a box of Alban Butler's popish books, which contained also a discipline and a hair shirt, would have been shared by many Roman Catholics; and Butler's biographer, relating

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1. Berington, "State and Behaviour", p.
Henry Swinburne, "Travels in the Two Sicilies in the years 1777, 1778, 1779 and 1782" (2nd edn. 4 vols, London 1790), (i), p.188.

2. Essex County Records Office, Petre Papers, Mss book of poems, etc., by Alexander Geddes, D/DP, Z.57.

the incident for a Catholic public, significantly omitted all mention of scourge and hair-shirt.[1.] Nevertheless, Jerningham, that pink and odious poet who sang his own abominable verses to the accompaniment of a harp,[2.] considered Catholicism so inextricably bound up with asceticism and " a system of terror" that he abandoned the church of his fathers for that more temperate fold by law established, and once settled there composed a tract on "The Mild Tenour of Christianity", specifically aimed at Catholics.[3.] Others however, were content to pick and choose, to profess a British Catholicism which avoided foreign excesses. As early as 1705 Addison noted that

'many of the Roman Catholick Gentlemen of our own Country... will not stick to laugh at the superstitions they sometimes meet with in other Nations '..[4.] Joseph Berington in the 1780's reported that continental follies and superstitions formed a frequent topic of levity and derision in 'rational' catholic circles,[5.] and Henry Swinburne's travel books furnished the reading public with an English papist's contemptuous account of

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1. British Museum, Cole Papers, Add.Mss,5826/15b. Charles Butler "Life of Alban Butler" in "Philological and Biographical works of Charles Butler" (= Butler, Works) (ed.1817), (iii), p.507.

2. L. Bethany "Edward Jerningham and his friends" (London 1919) pp. I ff.

3. Bethany, op.cit. p.12.

4. Joseph Addison: "Remarks on Several Parts of Italy in the Years 1701, 1702, 1703" (London, 1785), p.108.

5. Berington, "Reflections Addressed to the Revd. John Hawkins". (Birmingham 1785), pp.74-5.

superstition in Sicily, of monkish juggling with images in Monseratt, of clerical licentiousness in Tarragona, and of 'all manner of holy barbarities' everywhere. [1.]

Such sentiments were natural in the age which had produced Addison's 'Spectator' essays on witchcraft and superstition; they were, however, equally grounded in native Catholic attitudes. The disputes which had divided English Catholicism in the 17th century ensured the existence of a substantial body of anti-clerical, anti-Jesuit feeling among the laity, of hostility to the 'court of Rome' and mistrust of continential Catholicism, which wedded easily with

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1. Henry Swinburn, "Sicilies"
vol. (i), pp.171,187-191.
vol.(iii), pp.126-7 - which takes the form of a digression on the power of the Neopolitan clergy over the laity, now waning - "but still great is the empire which zealous or artful men exercise over the minds of the populace, and scarcely any imposition is too gross for the multitude".
For his hostility to the Papacy, "Sicilies" (i), pp.13, 17, 26-28, etc. On the religious orders see the same writer's "Travels through Spain in the years 1775 and 1776" (London, 1779). p.53 - a passage relating an attempt by the monks of Montserrat to abolish the right of those who venerate the miraculous image of the Madonna there to free hospitality. "... such a scheme being very contrary to the interests of the miraculous image, she resented it highly, and according to her old custom, vanished in anger from the altar. Soon after, she was discovered in the cave where she was originally found ... It was thought expedient to wink at this juggling, not to alarm the common people, who are not sufficiently enlightened to see through such gross impositions".
He relates at p.78 an extremely scandalous story of a practical joke played on a monastery full of leches by the local bloods and the ladies of the town brothel.
And see on p.384, on an Enlightened Spanish priest, complaining of living in "... a kingdom which is ruled by the stupid idle monkish tribe, where it is thought a crime to deviate an inch from the rule laid down by the hooded blockheads". Swinburne professes to speak for "... all the truly learned and sensible persons of (his) communion... " (Sicilies (i) p.187) and notes with approval the strides "... towards sense and philosophy" being made by backward papist nations as a result of foreign travel. (Spain, p.68)

It is worth comparing the tone of Swinburne's works with Alban Butler's very different "Travels through France and Italy .. in .. 1745-6". (Edinburgh 1803)

Enlightenment attitudes.[1.] Much of the hostility to the religious orders and the Papacy which abounded among the secular clergy of the period was directly traceable to the Chapter disputes of the previous century, to the group of priests surrounding Thomas White, alias Blackloe (described by Philip Hughes as 'the nearest thing to a heresiarch England has produced!).[2.] Blackloe founded a 'school' of thought which was severely rationalistic; his system was formally condemned by Rome, but many of his attitudes were perpetuated among the clergy, and by them his memory was preserved with respect. Charles Dodd summed up the Secular tradition's understanding of Blackloe:

> 'He was, indeed, a kind of enterprizer in the search of truth; and sometimes waded too deep: which, with the attempt of distinguishing between the schoolmen's superstructures, and strict fundamentals, lay'd him open to be censured by those, that were less inquisitive'.[3.]

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1. See, for example, Charles Dodd's "Secret Policy", passim and the same writer's "History of the English College at Douay" (London 1713) pp.23-4, 25 (on the "Court of Rome) Basil Hemphill "The Early Vicars Apostolic of England" (London 1954) passim.
E. Burton "The Life and Times of Bishop Challenor" (London 1909) (ii), pp.181-214.

2. Robert Pugh "Blacklo's Cabal, discovered in several of their letters clearly expressing designs inhumane against Regulars, unjust against the laity, schismatical against the Pope, cruel against orthodox clergymen, and owning the nullity of the Chapter their opposition to Episcopal authority. (1680)
For the best modern account of Blacklo and his associates, see Robert I. Bradley's "Blacklo and the Counter-Reformation" in "From the Renaissance to the Counter-Reformation" (Ed. Charles H. Carter, London, 1966) and M. V. Hay, "The Jesuits and the Popish Plot" (Sands and Co. n.d.)

3. Charles Dodd, "The Church History of England from 1500 to 1688, chiefly with regard to Catholicks..." (Brussels (false imprint), 1737-42) (iii) p.286 and see Hay, op.cit., p.46.
cf. also R. Clark "Strangers & Sojourners at Port Royal" (Cambridge 1932) pp.149 ff.

So mild a verdict on the friend of Hobbes and the object of Bayle's admiration, indicates a surprising native Catholic tolerance of 'rational religion'; it is accordingly difficult to distinguish what is 'Catholic' and what 'Enlightenment'. Alexander Pope is generally thought of as a spokesman of the English age of reason. Yet he also was a Catholic, and his letters to Catholic friends display a set of religious attitudes which could be derived equally from his Papist or his deist associates. His condemnation of religious orders, the superstition of the Catholic ages, clerical narrowmindedness and the 'wrangles of the schools' [1.] made, as he claimed, 'in the character of an unbigoted Roman Catholick and an impartial critic' can be amply paralleled in English Catholic sources, and yet were also a staple of Enlightenment polemic. Nor were such accommodations restricted to fringe Catholics like Pope. Nathanial Hooke, Pope's friend, and the man responsible for the poet's deathbed reconciliation to the church [2.] had a son, Abbe Luke Joseph Hooke, who was destined to epitomize the gradual infiltration of Enlightenment ideas into Catholicism. Abbe Hooke became a professor of Theology at the Sorbonne, where he taught such modern and unorthodox notions as the essential goodness of human nature, and the equality of all men; he it was who presided over the notorious Prades disputation, being one of the three judges to accept a thesis which openly taught Enlightenment doctrine. [3,]

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1. "The Correspondence of Alexander Pope" ed. G. Sherburn, (Oxford 1956) (i) p.118, 127, 151, etc.

2. J. Kirk "Biographies of English Catholics in the 18th century" (London 1968) 'Hooke, Nathaniel' and 'Hooke, Luke Joseph'. Pope, Correspondence (iv), p.526 (n)
R. Hayes "Biographical Dictionary of Irishmen in France" (Dublin, 1949), p.126 (Both Hookes were born in Dublin).

3. R. R. Palmer, op.cit., pp.40-1, 51, 57(n), 92, 123, 126(n), 167, 171(n), 221.

It is tempting to believe that some at least of Hooke's predeliction for novelty stems from his associations with his father's liberal circle, where Catholics rubbed shoulders with unbelievers - (Hooke's father even enlisted Bolingbrooke's aid to further the Abbe's ecclesiastical career!!). [1.]

Thomas Phillips, a secular priest with a Jesuit training, published in 1754 a 'letter' on the study of Theology. [2.] The book was a seminarian's manual, neither particularly conservative, nor particularly revolutionary. Based on a work by Mabillon, it laid great stress on the study of the Scriptures and church history. There were some surprises - Locke's paraphrase on the Epistles, was highly recommended; an odd choice for a Catholic writer, but then English priests were notoriously easy about their reading, and the absence of the 'Index' facilitated much theological promiscuity. [3.] The most strikingly 'Enlightened' aspect of the book was in its bitter condemnation of the 'monstrous heaps of rubbish' the 'crude notions and barbarous language, ... the low sophistry and endless wranglings, the useless and superfluous disquisitions' which were

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1. Pope, Correspondence (iv), p.119. Pope to Allen, p.526 and (n).

2. Joseph Gillow: A literary and Biographical History, or "Biographical dictionary of English Catholics ..." (London 1885) (v) p.305 ff.
Thomas Phillips "The Study of Sacred Literature fully stated and considered, in a Discourse to a Student in Divinity". (London, 1765) This is the 3rd edition of 'A Letter to a Student .. on the Study of Divinity" (London, 1756)

3. On English priests and their reading, see Dom Hugh Aveling in Downside Review (Lxxix), 1961, No.255, Spring, p.135-152.
The large number of Jansenist and Gallican writings in the library at Oscott College reveals their popularity among Missioners. ("Recusant Books at St. Mary's, Oscott" (ii) (Oscott, 1966). Ed. G.F. Pullen (hereafter = Oscott Books))
Two missioners' book-lists in Birmingham Archdiocican Archives (BAA/A434-A471) include works by Van Espen, Fra Paolo Sarpi, Pascal, Fleury, Collier -.
See also Alexander Geddes, "Letter..to the R.R. John Douglass, Bishop of Centuriae.." (London 1794,pp.12-13)
"Englishmen will read what books they please; and do read what books they please, although these may have been censured by a much higher authority than that of a Vicar Apostolic. At Rome, my Lord, you know how many volumes are condemned, which are daily read without remorse."

scholastic Theology.[1] Such outspoken criticism is surprising from one who elsewhere in the book displayed his abhorrence of enlightenment figures like Bolingbrooke and Pope,[2] and is all the more powerful as an indication of the acceptance of characteristic modern attitudes into orthodox thinking.

Indeed, 'Modernity', the sense of belonging to one's own times, so conspicuously absent from earlier Catholic writers like Gother, was increasingly a part of 18th century Catholic awareness. Swinburne, in the late 1770's, visited the isle of Capri, and

> suffered there a fit of Romantic melancholy 'akin to that .... excited in my mind by the lecture of the poems attributed to Ossian'. The beauty and antiquities of the island fired him with longing for other, nobler ages, and distaste for his own. But the mood did not last. Dispersing 'those clouds of spleen and false reasoning' he was soon returning thanks to Providence 'for having placed my lot in an age wherein arts, commerce and science are in so flourishing a state'.[3]

Equally characteristic was the preface to Berington's 'History of Henry II', addressed to Charles James Fox, "Just emerged from the view of times, to which modern vanity has imputed a peculiar darkness, it was natural, I should turn my eyes to the characters of this island, that, by comparison, I might establish their relative

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1. Phillips, Op cit., p.110, "Casuistry" fares no better, surprisingly perhaps, in an author with Jesuit sympathies and training. Cf. Phillips Op cit. pp.118 ff. and compare Pope, "Rape of the Lock", Canto v II, 115 ff., for the 'lumping together' of

> "The Courtier's Promises, and Sick Man's prayers
> The Smiles of Harlots and the tears of Heirs,
> Cages for Gnats, and Chains to Yoak a Flea,
> Dry'd Butterflies, and Tomes of Casuistry."

Compare also Berington, "A Letter to Doctor Fordyce in Answer to his Sermon on the Delusive and Persecuting Spirit of Popery" (London 1779), pp.22, 29, 66.

2. Phillips Op cit p.43.

3. Swinburne, 'Sicilies' vol.III, p.37.

excellence, weighing manners with manners, and men with men. That the result was favourable to my own days, it is unnecessary to say". [1.] He who sups with the devil must use a long spoon; as might be expected the encounter with the age occasionally proved fatal to belief. William Constable of Everingham was one such casuality to infidelity, who travelled much abroad, read widely and dangerously, and became the friend of Rousseau: he became a deist, so forfeiting the hand of his papist bride to be, and on his death-bed informed the priest who attended him that he believed 'nothing'. [2.] Sir John Swinburne of Capheaten fell a prey to the Gallic madness, swaggering about his estate in the company of a fellow apostate, hailing his acquaintances as 'Citizens'; his wife greeted the revolution with the lisped cry 'All for liberty' as she drove, silk clad, in a carriage attended by liveried footmen. [3.]

These were extreme cases, and infidelity was not, perhaps, so common as the less drastic passage into the National heresy. As Catholics increasingly imbibed the liberal spirit of the men of Latitude, so intolerance came to seem the worst of all sins. The fate of those who 'died beyond the hallow'd pale', of, in a word, dead Protestants, troubled some liberal spirits:-

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1. Joseph Berington, "History of the Reign of Henry II" (Birmingham, 1790), p. (i).

2. 'Constable, William', Kirk.
H. Aveling "Post Reformation Catholicism in East Yorkshire" 1558-1790 (York, 1960), p.51 and (n).
Some of Constable's correspondence with Jean Jaques Rousseau is preserved in the Bodleian library, C.229 ff, 129-130, 133, 136.

3. L.E.O. Charlton (ed.) "The Recollections of a Northumbrian Lady ..' being the memoirs of Barbara Charlton" (London,1949), p.194.

'Yet why despond? Could one slight error roll
A flood of poison o'er the healthful soul?
... By love, by piety, by reason taught
My soul revolts at the blaspheming thought:
Sure, in the breast to pure religion true,
Where Virtue's templed, God is templed too. ' [1.]

Given such views, some Catholics found adherence to the Church of the Inquisition and the Council of Trent, the 'most ill-natured religion in the world', impossible, and a number of the clerical apostasies of the time, particularly among the liberal circle of Berington and his associates, were attributable to that motive. [2.]

For those who stayed, the problems of 'liberality' was equally pressing. Adventurous Catholic squires demonstrated their breadth of mind by rebuilding Anglican churches, or with presentation

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1. Edward Jerningham, "Poems" (ii), pp.66-7 'Honoria, or, the day of all souls, a poem'. the poem takes the form of a meditation during the office and Mass for the dead in St. Ambrose's,Milan.

2. So, for example, Charles Henry Wharton, a Jesuit Missioner at Worcester whose friendships with Protestants convinced him of the 'unchristianlike' intolerance of Catholicism - see his "A Letter to the Roman Catholics of the city of Worcester from the late Chaplain of that Society" (London,1784) and Wharton's and Berington's friend, John Hawkins, a Benedictine who apostatized in 1780 - Cf. Kirk 'Wharton, Charles Henry'. 'Hawkins, John' and John Hawkins "An appeal to Scripture, Reason and Tradition ..." (Worcester n.d. but 1785) For an example earlier in the century, see the apostate William Huddleston of Sawston, who preached a recantation in Manchester Collegiate church in 1729 (T. F. Teversham "A History of the village of Sawston" (Crampton and Sons, Sawston, Cambs, 1947) Pt. II, pp.124-6, and a MSS defense of his action in Cambridge Record office, the Huddleston Papers. Huddleston was not a typical 'Enlightenment' figure, but his belief in the universal availability of Salvation chimes perfectly with those of Wharton etc.

sets of altar-plate for the parson, [1] and in the last years of the century Toleration became the idol of very many Catholics. That concern, indeed, introduces a note of pragmatism into Catholic liberality. Those concerned to refute accusations of superstition and popish gullibility that they might win emancipation had a vested interest in being 'advanced'; and they undertook the role of enlightened men with earnestness. William Cowper dined with the Throckmortons in June 1786. "I happened to say" he wrote, "that in all professions and trades mankind affected an air of mystery. Physicians ... persist in prescribing in Latin, many times no doubt to the hazard of a patient's life, through the ignorance of an apothecary. Mr. Throckmorton .. turning to his chaplain, to my infinite surprise observed to him, "That is just as absurd as our praying in Latin". I could have hugged him for his liberality....." [2] Indeed the world of such illuminati was one in which all 'liberal' men were to embrace in brotherhood. By this charmed key of liberality the gates of civic equality would be unlocked. And so they believed, or said they believed, that the world was becoming more tolerant: the fires of bigotry and faction would be quenched, and religious disagreements would pale before the rising sun of liberty, fraternity, equality. The prospect moved the priest Alexander Geddes to song.

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1. J. Nichols, "Literary Anecdotes of the 18th Century", (1812-15) (iii) p.700. Letter of Daniel Price commending Sir Robert Throckmorton who "... has done great things to preserve and restore Buckland (his parish) church" and "excellent example to other Roman Catholick gentry".
   Nichols "Illustrations", (i) p.327. Lord Petre building an Anglican church.
   Milner "Supplementary Memoirs", p.45 "Nor was this all, but, to prove what they called their liberality, they even presented Protestant churches with communion cups and dishes".

2. W. Hayley, Op.cit. (i), pp.200-1. Cowper to Lady Hesketh, June 4th-5th, 1786.

No more Religion, with fanatic hand
Shall fan the fires of faction in the land
But mild and gentle like her heavenly sire
No other flames but those of love inspire.
Papist and Protestant shall strive to raise,
In different notes ONE great CREATOR'S praise
Polemic volumes on their shelves shall rot
And Hays and Abernethies be forgot. [1.]

Here lay yet another difference between these liberals and their fellow Catholics, for they sought the "End of Religious Controvsy", not, like Bishop Milner, in unanswerable "polemic volumes", but in the rediscovery of the glorious truth that the Gospel was, after all, a simple thing, and men had strained at gnats too long. They were, it might be said, optimists. "We differ" wrote Joseph Berington in 1790, "on points to which men, I think, have given an undue weight; but the common principles of Christianity and benevolence ... must ever remain, I trust, equally dear to all". His trust was large, for the words were addressed to no ordinary Protestant, but to the Unitarian Joseph Priestly, and the 'points to which men had given undue weight' included, as his Catholic critics were swift to point out, such trifles as the Trinity, and the atoning death of Christ. [2.]

Critics there were in plenty, and the advance of 'philosophy'

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1. John Mason Good, "Life of Alexander Geddes" (London 1803) p.70.

2. Berington to Hoseph Priestly, October 20th, 1790. Printed in the preface to Priestly's "Evidence of the Resurrection of Jesus considered" (Birmingham 1791), p.xiv. and see Milner, Supplementary Memoirs, p.45-6.

did not go unnoticed or unwept. English Catholicism possessed an endemic resistence to innovation, which found ready and sometimes extreme expression throughout the century. There was, for example, the case of the unfortunate Doctor Charles Fell, denounced to Rome as a heretic, apparently because the quota of miracles in his 4 volume 'Lives of the Saints' fell below the minimum requirements of orthodoxy.[1.] There were more serious causes for orthodox concern: after 1760 Catholic 'Enlightenment' and hostility to the 'idle monkish tribe' led to a virtual drying up of religious vocations in the North.[2.] Catholic Pastors found much to concern them in growing religious apathy and the decay among the gentry of such institutions as family prayers,[3.] and the falling away of well-known Catholics, like Constable and Jerningham, did nothing to raise the prestige of those liberalizers who remained. So Catholic fathers warned their sons against becoming 'the dupe(s) of modern philosophy' and 'the sophistry which the fashionable principles engender';[4.] in 1780 a Northern Squire

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1. Charles Fell The Lives of the Saints, collected from Authentick Records.. (London 1750) 2nd ed.
Gillow (ii) p.239. Fell's work was first published in 1728, while the memories of the Douay Jansenist controversy were still fresh in men's minds; George Witham, who denounced him, was a strong "anti-jansenist", and a thorough-going conservative. Fell complained in his preface of the excessive "credulity" of Catholics, criticized the modern Catholic cult of relics, and uncritical attitude to miracles, and advocated that his "devout Readers" undertake more "rigorous Fasts" - all 'jansenistical' suggestions.

2. H. Aveling. "Northern Catholics", p.392.

3. B.A.A. A. 1277 (an 'Ad Clerum' from Bishop Hornyold to Missioners working as family chaplains).

4. Worcester Record Office: Ber ington Papers. 705: 24/994 Mss. book of the 18th Century, an unsigned and undated 'Letter to my son' - an earlier item in this book bears the date 1769. And see Stephen Tempest's "Religio Laici, or a Layman's Thoughts upon God.." London, 1764, pp.21-22.
"To attack, to laugh at, to ridicule Religion, is a favourite topic among young men of Fortune; nay, God knows, we have often heard Christianity itself decried in Companies which we might expect should know better". Tempest's book was written, in the first place, for the benefit of his son. Cf. Aveling "The Catholic Recusants of the West Riding of Yorkshire, 1558 -1790" Leeds, 1963. (in Proceedings of the Leeds Philosophical and Literary Society) p,262. and the same writer's 'Catholic Recusancy in the City of York, 1558-1791' (CRS memograph 1970), p.125-6.

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lamented that there was ".. scarce any extravagance or folly so absurd as has not its zealous votaries among our rising generation.." [1.] and Alban Butler commiserated in 1766 with his friend Parson Cole on the 'infection' of these new 'Philosophers', their 'absurdity and inconsistency' their rash errors and licentious morals'. [2.] In the cramped world of Recusant Catholicism those who drank too deeply of the waters of Enlightenment, or who tasted them at all, were more likely to be treated as delinquents than 'enterprizers after truth'. This Conservative opposition to all trickle with the thought of the age was **trenchantly** expressed by Robert Bannister, one-time professor of Theology at Douay.

"A certain Priest in this country, dead above twenty years ago, had in his collection of books Bayle's Dictionary, which at his death he bequeathed to a physician, whose religion was the same, that his horse or dog had. The priest indeed had another to visit him in his lingering illness, and as we must hope, did give him the holy Sacraments, but .. I think the priest, his confessor, ought to have commanded him to burn his Bayle". [3.]

Such uncompromisingly diverse ideologies could not long coexist in a community so cramped as that of the English papists. Every educated Catholic in England knew, or knew of, all his more polished

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1. Aveling, 'Northern Catholics', p.381.

2. B. M. Add. Mss. 5826/25b. Alban Butler to William Cole, Feb. 28th, 1766.

3. Robert Bannister to Thomas Eyre, October 24th 1799, Ushaw College, Eyre Correspondence (20). The same letter complains of 'young and giddy divines' imbibing 'deistical notions' in France. (= E.C)

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co-religionists, and the same minority culture which threw them so much together made friction and dispute inevitable.[1.] The first encounter between liberal and conservative occured, not however, in England, but in the Alma Mater of English Catholicism, Douay College: it came too, not as a purely internecine English Catholic quarrel, but as part of a dispute then agitating the European Church at large, and which locates the opposing forces in English Catholicism within a larger intellectual milleu. R. R. Palmer has brilliantly shewn the extent of the infiltration of many of the most fundamental ideas of the Enlightenment into Orthodox Catholic thinking and writing,[2.] and the century saw the growth of a body of Catholic scholars and philosophers, many of them priests, tainted in varying degrees with the new attitudes. Their enlightenment ranged from a mere desire to be 'advanced' to a thorough-going rationalism, from the perenial acerbity of the 'liberal' to open scepticism. The English abroad would naturally encounter such spirits. In 1774 Joseph Priestly made the aquaintance of John Hyacinth De Magellan, a Portugese Jesuit, often in England, and "far more attached to Philosophy than Christianity".[3.] Swinburne finds room in the fourth volume of his 'Sicily' for an account of the admirable Canon Joseph Recupero, one who had 'renounced all thoughts of ecclesiastical preferment', of which the door had been effectively

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1. See, for example, 'The Mawhood Diary. Selections from the diary notebooks of William Mawhood, woollen-draper of London, for the years 1764-1790'. Ed. by E. E. Reynolds for the Catholic Record Soc. (1956). Almost every priest of any note in the English Catholic community between 1770-90 dined with, suped with, or in some way encountered this staunch Catholic tradesman.
2. Palmer, Op.cit. Paul Hazard 'European Thoughts in the 18th Century',(Penguin, 1965) pp.100-105.
3. Joseph Priestly: 'Memoirs of Dr. Joseph Priestley to the year 1795, written by himself; with a contribution to the time of his decease by his son ...' (London) 1806-7. (I) pp.73-4.

shut against him on account of his 'bold liberal way of thinking and speaking', and who had the misfortune to die, Swinburne tells us, before he had 'the satisfaction of seeing the abolition of the Inquisition' in his native land.[1] But English Catholics did not merely meet such men: occasionally they joined their ranks. We have already encountered Dr. Hooke of the Sorbonne, the son of Pope's friend, a thoroughly enlightened believer in the essential goodness of man and the reasonableness of the Gospel. "There is " he wrote in 1752, "in all men a general benevolence and freely given goodness ... thus there is no duty that is not commended to us not only by reason but even by appetite ..." There were others like him. The Reverend J. H. Needham became the first Popish priest to be elected to the Royal Society for his Microscopical work, and his collaboration with Buffon in the latter's 'Natural History'. He composed treatises on a variety of topics ranging from the farina foecundans of plants to the supposed Egyptian origin of the Chinese nation. He engaged in a correspondence with Voltaire in the subject of miracles, and was contemptuously dismissed by the Sage of Ferney as an 'Irish Jesuit', (though he was neither).[2] Voltaire's taunt

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1. Swinburne, "Travels in the two Sicilies" (IV), pp.125-6. Recupero's researches into the age of the earth from lava strata in Sicily led him to doubt the mosaical account of the creation - see Gents. Mag. 45 (1775), p.361.

2. Kirk, 'Needham'. Gillow V p.157-160. D.N.B.
Peter Gay "The Enlightenment, an Interpretation" (London 1967-70, 2 vols.) II p.151
The quotation from Hooke is from 'Religionis Naturalis et moralis philosophicae principia ...' (Paris, 1752-4) (I), p.486-7, cited Palmer, Op.cit. p.51.

indicates that Needham, though undoubtedly in tune with his age, was far from being a thorough-going 'Philosopher', and his friend Abbé Mann wrote of him that 'his zealous opposition to modern infidels was indefatigable, and even passionate'.[1.] A contemporary English Review summed up the contradictions;

"...this honest man was narrow, even to superstition and bigotry in his religious system; and we never knew a man in whom there was such an unnaccountable mixture of implicit faith and philosophical curiosity as Mr. Needham".[2.]

Equally endowed with philosophical curiosity was Abbé Mann. Converted to Catholicism, like Gibbon, by reading Bossuet, Mann embarked in 1757 on the pursuit of learning as an English Carthusian at Nieuport. He wrote on Agriculture and Antiquities, Physic and political economy; in 1776 he was appointed Minister of Public instruction in the service of Joseph II at Brussels.[3.] Like Needham, he was far from being a 'Philosophe ', but again like him his 'unsatiable thirst for study' led him to collaboration and correspondence with the leading intellects of the day, and to interest himself in issues of which the very discussion might cast suspicion on a man's orthodoxy. And in particular, he pondered much on the subject of materialism.

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1. Mann's obituary of Needham, summarised and quoted in Monthly Review (1784) (LXX), p.525.

2. Monthly Review, loc.cit.

3. Kirk, 'Mann', Gillow, (IV), p.402-406. D.N.B.
Edward Gibbon 'Autobiography' in 'Miscellaneous Works of Edward Gibbon, with memoirs of his life and writings'. (London 1814), (I), p.62.

The question of materialism was one of the most fundamental of the whole Enlightenment, and was reducible to the conflict between the supporters and opposers of the philosophy of Sensationalism. "The development of empirical philosophy from Locke to Berkeley" wrote Ernst Cassirer "represents a series of attempts to minimize the difference between sensations and reflection, and finally to wipe it out altogether. French philosophical criticism of the 18th century hammered at this same point also in an attempt to eliminate the last vestige of independence which Locke had attributed to reflection". [1.]

The men of the Enlightenment therefore, rigorously asserted the total dependence of the mind on experience, and the scholastic principle nihil in intellectu nisi prius in sensu was central to their thought. 'All opinions and attitudes, all knowledge and critical judgements, all purposes and ends and values, were implanted in each man by an experience received through sensation and differentiated by pleasure and pain'. [2.]

Orthodox Catholic thinkers, on the other hand, rested their thought on a solidly Cartesian basis. Against the Enlightenment assimilation of body and soul they asserted a fundamental dualism. Against the Lockian view of the soul as a passive 'tabula rasa' operated upon by sense imprevious, a concept which in the hands of mechanists like d'Holback became destructive of free will, the Catholic Cartesians set an essentially active mind or soul, directing

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1. Ernst Cassirer, "The Philosophy of the Enlightenment" (Beacon Press, Boston 1955), p.100

2. Palmer, Op Cit, p.133.

and acting on the corpuscles of matter which composed its body.[1.]

The conflict produced a tendency to mental polarisation, and though the Church could be permanently married to no Philosophy, the marks of orthodoxy became increasingly an adherence to the Cartesian dualism, the assertion of the inert nature of matter, of the essential activity of spirit, and the denial of the ame des betes.[2.]

Inevitably, there were many thinkers who ranked themselves among the orthodox, but who, to a greater or lesser degree, dissented from the Cartesian scholasticism; equally inevitably, such deviants were viewed with suspicion by the less adventursome. Occasionally the suspicions were justified. Abbé Prades' Sorbonne Thesis was an exposition of the sentence, "Man (is he) whose ideas, still rude and uninformed, are produced by sensations; hence from sensations, as branches from a trunk, all his cognitions take their rise". It contained the full-blown Sensationalist doctrine of Locke and Condillac, a doctrine which, in the hands of the Illuminati, was potentially destructive of the Christian world picture.[3.] There were many others less rigorous in their Enlightenment, who nevertheless substantially identified themselves with Empiricist thought. By the 1770's there were teachers in schools and universities throughout France who 'favoured the system of Locke and Condillac, and expressed themselves as openly as local conditions or their own discretion would allow'.[4.]

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1. ibid. pp.130-154. Cassirer, Op cit. pp.69 ff.

2. Palmer loc cit. The denial of the possession of 'souls' to animals was, of course, intended to exalt and 'spiritualize' human nature - cf. Palmer, p.150 "It was thus clearer to (Catholic critics) than to Locke himself that Locke's identification of the soul with the empirical self must end by making the mind essentially animal".

3. Palmer, loc cit.

4. ibid. p.153

Among these moderate liberals stood Needham and Mann. Both rejected the system of Descartes, who 'poor in the midst of his mathematical riches' had, according to Needham, displayed an 'intolerable deficiency in Metaphysicks' in his imposition 'under the mistaken notion of raising a fence for religion, of absurdities, destructive of it .. ' [1]. Both, in opposition to the current orthodoxy, asserted the essential activity of matter, setting a universe where 'all .. appears life, being, force, activity; all carries an aspect of grandeur, riches, fecundity, worthy of God ...' against the 'passive, negative, melancholy, inanimate, inactive extension brought into the schools by the Carthesians'. [2]. Both adhered to a modified Leibnitzian view of the universe as a limitless upward progress of 'monades' or 'essential principals of things' both material and spiritual, interacting and evolving towards ever-higher forms. Needham even advanced the theory that human souls, far from being created anew, were simply 'converted' monads, endowed by God with higher spiritual powers and perceptions, and so in continuity with, not opposition to, the rest of creation.[3].

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1. Throckmorton, MSS. John T. Needham to Joseph Bernington, Feb.12/1772 B.A.A. c 685 (a) Needham to Bernington Jan 2/1772.

2. ibid., and cf. Abbé Mann's 'Universal System of Beings, which allows an Essential Independent activity to all Beings according to their Rank of Existence". Throck. MSS. Mann to Bernington Aug.13/1771. Arthur O. Lovejoy, The Great Chain of Being (Harper Yearbook, 1960) Ch. VI - IX.

3. B.A.A. c 685 (a) Needham to Berington Jan 2/1772. "You may perhaps remember to have red (sic) that some of the school Peripaticians held that even the human soul was tradux ex adamo, not in Bonnet's sense, which you say is "magis Philosophicum", but in my opinion.... is gratis dictum, but in the sense of the Leibnitian (sic) system of monades, (sic) upon an additional supposition, that as God draws forth in a scale of being for ever exaltable to sensitive agent from among the principles of matter by gifting it with a new power, and elevating it for a time in the chain of existence, so he acts for the production of the intellectual soul of many, by conferring intelligence upon a monade chosen for that purpose ...."

There were, however, aspects of their thought which distinguished both men from more radical champions of Enlightenment. Though assenting whole-heartedly to the basic principles of Sensationalism, subscribing to the principle 'nihil est in intellectu quod non est prius in sense', [1.] the Leibitzian cast of their thought caused them to reject some of the consequences of a thorough-going Sensationalism. Carried to their logical conclusion, the principles of Locke and Condillac reduced the soul to a passive 'tabula rasa', acted upon by the senses, and essentially the same as every other soul - all being 'blank' to start with. Mann and Needham, with their infinite universe of diverse and evolving Monads, dissented. "I cannot persuade myself" wrote Mann "that animae omnes similes prorsus sunt, on the contrary, it is a consequence of my notion of things, that no two are prorsus similes, but in an Indefinite Gradation". [2.]

Both men were anxious, too, to remain within the limits of orthodoxy. Needham, expounding his own view of the origin of

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1. See A. A. W. Douay volume (48) Letter 86, Berington to Talbot Oct. 10/1771. 'Thus I myself was taught, thus all my predecessors as high as the first establishment of the College learned or taught, otherwise why admitted they that old Peripatetical principle, nil e in intellectu, quod prius no fuerit in sensu? (sic)". And B. A. A. c 685 (a) Needham to Berington Jan 2nd/1772 - "These doctrines with their immediate consequences, for which you are accused of innovation, were always taught in the college dictates, in the university of Douay, and every other university of Christendom till within these few years, and even the good Bishop Ch(alleno)r who joins us in the cry against your thesis, received them from his college ancestors ... as the undoubted sentiments of Aristotle, and S Thomas..." In the same letter Needham calls Locke's "Essay Upon Human Understanding" ... the recollection of an ancient truth, an escape from that labyrinth of falsehood, into which Descartes had conducted mankind, and a good commentary upon the old axiom of nihil est in intellectu, quod non prius fuerit in sensu"

2. Throck. Mss. Mann to Berington, August 13th, 1771.

the soul is careful to conclude "But I submit this matter entirely to the Church, and I am determined, till I can see more clearly into it, as far as faith may be concerned, not only not to advance in public but even not to have interiorly any opinion on the subject". [1.] Such elaborate orthodoxy was equalled by Abbé Mann, who declared himself increasingly "... through the Divine Grace, rivitted .. to the Holy Catholick Church, in what I cannot comprehend as well as in what I can." [2.]

For all their deliberate moderation, Mann and Needham were objects of suspicion and censure to many of their English co-religionists. Needham in particular incurred severe criticism for his collaboration with M. de Buffon in the 'Histoire Naturelle': old-fashioned English Catholics condemned his activities as 'vicious' and he found it necessary to protest that:

".. If any of these superannuated veterans should still think, that after I left the College I resumed these studies, or maintained a correspondence.. with infidel Philosophers in any other view, than that of defending Christianity, they are very much mistaken..." [3.] His case was not improved by the Baron d'Holback's use of his scientific work as evidence for the mechanist and deter-

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1. B.A.A. c 685 (a) Needham to Berington, Jan. 2/1772.
2. Throck. Mss, Mann to Berington, August 13/1771.
3. B.A.A. c 685 (a) Needham to Berington, Jan 2/1772.

minist opinions expressed in the "Système de la Nature", [1] a circumstance which determined Needham to issue a definitive edition of his own works, suitably corrected so as to afford no such footholds to infidelity. [2] Mann, too, acquired his share of infamy from his professed contempt for "Thomistic tenets", his opposition to the "fanatical principles of the Jesuitical party", and his suspected adherence to materialist and fatalist doctrine; he complained to one correspondent of enemies who sought to convince "... the chief prelates .. that I am without religion and a secret enemy to the church." [3]

Into this milieu the young Joseph Berington entered on becoming Professor of Philosophy at Douay in 1770. The English College at Douay was of course a strictly English institution, with its own professors and its own academic traditions. It existed, however, within the context of the University of Douay, where Berington took a Licentiate in Theology in 1770. In this he was untypical; since the Jansenist scares of the first decade of the century, the ties between the English College and the French Universities had been loosened, in the interests of orthodoxy. [4]

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1. Throck Mss. Needham to Berington, Jan. 28/1774. Needham talks of taxing d'Holbach with "..misapplying my experiments in general and quoting them as proofs of his absurd doctrine".
2. ibid.
3. Throck Mss. Mann to Berington, Jan 26/1774. Nichols Literary Anecdotes (ix) p.265, Mann to Philip Thicknesse.
4. L. Mahieu "L'Université, le parlement et la ville de Douai au xviiie s. pendant les querelles jansenistes", in Revue du Nord xxvi (1943), pp. 263-292. "La Philosophie a l'Université de Douai au xviiie s." in Mélanges de Sciences Religieuses XIV(1957) pp.71 - 82. E. Burton "Life of Bp.Challoner", vol.(i), pp.29 ff. P. Guilday, "The English Catholic Refugees on the Continent". (London), 1914. pp.330 ff.
David Milburn "A History of Ushaw College" (Durham 1964), pp.9-12. The break between Douai English College and the University was not purely a defensive measure in the interests of orthodoxy. The University antagonised the English by excluding College staff from University Professorships in 1706, and a number of quarrels ensued which made relations extremely tense - Burton, op.cit. (i) p. 50 f.

The philosophical and theological teaching in the College was, therefore, conservative. Bishop Challoner, in an admonitory note to the newly appointed President of the College in 1770 wrote:

".. As to studies in general, I should not advise putting y(ou)r people out of their old track, or admitting of any innovations without mature deliberation and advice from hence". [1.] He was merely echoing President Robert Witham's 'Advice to a future President' which every 18th century President inherited as a blue-print for his rule:

".. I observ'd before ", Witham had written, "how careful all .. masters must be to follow Thomistical doctrine as prescribed .. in our Constitutions and to avoid any singular or suspected opinions. [2.] The conservative tradition had been firmly upheld by men such as Alban Butler, who, as Professor of Philosophy before 1750 had resolutely opposed all "heterodox" philosophy, such as that of Leibnitz and Woolfe, exercising, according to one contemporary:

"... extreme caution .. in inserting anything new in his dictates (lectures), particularly on any subject connected with .. religion." [3.] But however static teaching at the English College might remain, matters were otherwise at Douay University itself. That institution was experiencing the full force of the wind of change. On the 4th of December 1768, le Pr. Dainville, Professor of Mathematics

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1. A. A. W. (48) Douay Papers, an undated draft in Challoner's hand, headed "To Mr. H. T. Blount, going to D.C.".
   Burton, Challoner, (ii), pp.119-121.

2. "Seventh Douay Diary", Catholic Record Society, vol.(28) (= C.R.S. 28) p.320.

3. C. Butler, Works, vol. (iii), p.495.

at Douay, wrote to the Chancellor, accusing Le College du Roi at Douay of dragging its feet in the march towards enlightenment. The College taught, he claimed: ".. an antiquated and barbaric philosophy, no better than pure and simple ignorance", calculated to corrupt reason and encourage fanaticism. The College's science, he went on, was nothing more than Aristotelian physics, "... disfigured by the Arabs, and all the errors of Descartes".[1] But Dainville's condemnation of this disgrace to "un siècle eclairé" was not the isolated voice crying in an obscurantist wilderness it more or less claims to be. His attack was vigorously repudiated by M. Ernotte, the principle of the College du Roi, in terms which are, to say the least, surprising. While admitting that "les positions traditionelles" were indeed mentioned and discussed in College theses, Ernotte argued that this was entirely the fault of the Religious houses at Douay, where Monks and Friars kept these dead issues open: the College du Roi itself had long ago, he claimed, abandoned "la philosophie ancienne", and was, in this respect, an honourable example to the rest of the University. Its teaching was ".. solidly established on the principles of modern philosophy .." with a stress on experimental physics, mathematics and the other sciences - in short, Ernotte claimed, the College du Roi accorded in everything with the best Parisian models.[2]

So complete a capitulation to the spirit of the times was unlikely to appeal to the rulers of the English College; they remained largely immune to such modernity. But not completely so. A

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1. L. Mahieu, "Mélanges de Sciences Religieuses" XIV. p.74.
2. ibid., p. 75.

growing Empiricism showed itself in the College teaching after 1750; after that date Locke's doctrines were increasingly adopted by College professors.[1.] The tendency, however, was hardly world-shaking; Locke, like Newton, was part of the air the men of the 18th century breathed. His influence could be totally escaped only by a hermit or an illiterate.

The young priest who occupied the chair of Philosophy at Douay in 1771 was far from being either. Joseph Berington was the younger son of a staunchly Recusant family of the middling gentry.[2.] His great-uncle Simon before him had been Professor of Philosophy at Douay, and a prolific author, very much involved in the controversies of his time.[3.] Like most Catholics of his generation, Simon Berington did not welcome the age of Enlightenment; he composed a work on "The Mosaical Account of Creation", to combat " .. Infidels and Hutchinsonians, La Pluche, Woodward and Sir Isaac Newton .." !![4.] His nephew's temperament was far other than this, and he quickly made it clear that the traditional taboos of the Douay curriculum meant little to him. While at the College Alban Butler had singled out the philosophy of Leibnitz and his disciples for particular censure; Berington, on the other hand, rapidly struck up a close philosophical

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1. Milburn, op.cit., pp.10-12.
2. Kirk, "Berington, Joseph", Gillow, (i), pp.189-197.
3. Kirk, "Berington, Simon", Gillow, (i), pp.197-199.
4. Gillow, loc.cit.

friendship with Mann and Needham, whose Leibnitzian leanings were well-known, and whose hostility to the traditional Catholic "schools" was notorious. Needham, taking a fatherly interest in the young philosopher, recommended to Berington the study of Charles Bonnet, a Genevan microscopist whose failing eye-sight had turned him to philosophy.[1] Bonnet was a protestant, and considered unorthodox even by his co-religionists, but his attraction for Needham is easy to understand. Both were natural scientists, microscopists, whose philosophical systems were centred on a vision of the "great chain of being" from dumb matter up to man. Both drew heavily on Leibnitz, both held loosely "evolutionary" opinions. Bonnet, however, was much more radical in his thinking than Needham. While accepting the unity, simplicity, and indivisibility of souls, orthodox key words in the Sensationalist controversy, Bonnet taught that all animals possessed souls, ultimately as perfectible, though after their own fashion, as those of human beings, an evolutionary vision which astonished and outraged the orthodox.[2] He boldly used language which seemed to favour a purely material notion of the soul. "We must always pass through physics in order to arrive at the soul".[3] he wrote, and whole-heartedly endorsed the sensationalist

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1. On Bonnet, see Georges Bonnet "Charles Bonnet, 1720-1793" (Paris 1930). Palmer, op.cit. pp.112-117. For Needham's recommendation see Throck Mss. Mann to Berington, Jan. 26th, 1774.

2. The most convenient summary in English of Bonnet's ideas is his own preface to the English version of "The Contemplation of Nature" (London 1766).

3. Charles Bonnet, op.cit., (i) p. xxxci.

view that "all our ideas are originally derived from the senses". [1.] He admitted, with the orthodox, that the soul was not a passive 'tabula rasa', but an active principle, working on the body; yet in the same breath he asserted that in all probability all souls were 'exactly identical', being differentiated only by the physical ordering of the body which housed them. [2.] Again, while admitting the possibility of the existence of pure spirits, he expressed his own inability to conceive of a human soul continuing to possess conscious identity out of the body. To explain therefore the life after death he housed souls within a 'small ethereal machine' which survived the body, and so made the soul itself material. [3.] Finally, he happily conceded that man might after all, as the 'libertines' asserted, be wholly material, and argued that this supposition would in no way affect Christian belief! [4.]

Such a model could not have commended himself to many English Catholics, but Berington drew heavily on his works for his lectures, and copies of Bonnet's writings began to circulate among his pupils. [5.] All this was a domestic matter, and might have passed

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1. ibid,, p.xxx

2. ibid., p.xlvi - xlvii.

3. ibid., p.xxxi , Palmer op.cit., pp.113-4.

4. Charles Bonnet op.cit. (i) p.lii-liii. "Grant the materialist the principle he is so fond of, and which deceives him, allow him for a moment that the soul is material; what will he gain by such a concession? Will it not still remain to be demonstrated that there does not exist a WISE BEING, who essentially desires the happiness of the just ... the punishment of the wicked .. and the highest perfection which all his creatures are capable of?"

5. Throck. Mss. Mann to Berington, Jan. 26th, 1774.
A. A. W. (48) Douay Papers. Alban Butler to H. P. Blount, August 7th, 1771.

unnoticed; but in March 1771 Berington's pupils were due to dispute publicly in the university, a number of 'theses' proposed by their master. These theses, set out in a series of numbered Latin paragraphs, were an established part of the Douay system, and intended to summarise the previous year's lectures and test the students' grasp of them. Berington's contained an innovation - he prefixed a preface to the theses, denouncing in lurid Latin the Scholastic Philosophers who had brought 'infamy' upon Philosophy by their 'obnoxious hash of words'; and praising extravagantly that 'vir metaphysicus, Genevensis Bonnet' to whom it had been given, according to Berington, to pierce the mystery of body and soul more deeply than any other man.[1] The theses themselves contained much to alarm the orthodox. Berington came down strongly in favour of the Sensationalist philosophy, rejecting any suggestion of 'innate ideas'. All thought depended upon sensation. ' Qui omni sensu careret, idea careret omni'. The soul without the body' cannot act, cannot fell, cannot perceive'.[2] The theses abounded in provocative statements, which, whatever their philosophical content, were certain to grate upon orthodox ears. Asserting the total dependence of the mind on experience for all its ideas, Berington drew the conclusion that we perceive only the modifications of our own minds, and outside ourselves can experience nothing: therefore 'our ideas and their internal relations constitute for us the whole universe...

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1. For the latin text, see Appendix A. I have traced only two copies. One is Bp. Challoner's, and now in A.A.W. (48). The other is at Ushaw College, Durham, and is the one reproduced in App. A. Both bear underlinings in pencil in the same "objectionable" places.

2. App. A. Section headed "IDEARUM ORIGO".

Malebranche saw all things in God: we see all in ourselves".[1.]

Following Bonnet, Berington suggested that animals possessed souls which are subject to modification, like human souls, and which do not necessarily perish with the body.[2.] However tentative his language on this point the suggestion would be bound to strike orthodox Cartesians as destructive of the uniqueness of the human soul, an attempt to assimilate man to the beast. Berington too, accepts the Sensationalist notion of the essential similarity of all souls, differentiated only by bodily organisation.[3.] He followed Bonnet also in suggesting that souls are not created "ex nihilo" with each birth, but exist in the form of "preexistent germs" from the beginning of the world; and like the German Philosopher he rejected any attempt to explain the mystery of the union and interaction of soul and body, though he suggested that the Leibnitzian theory of "preestablished harmony" had much to commend itself to a "Philosophical man".[4.]

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1. App.A. "IDEAE" - especially from "solas suas modificationes...." and cf. Cassirer op cit p.96 "Thus Descartes' doctrine of innate ideas is intensified in Malebranche to the assertion that we see all things in God. There is no true knowledge of things except in so far as we relate our sense perceptions to ideas of pure reason. It is only through this relation that our ideas gain objective meaning, only thus that they cease to be mere modifications of the ego, and come to represent objective reality and order .." Berington's rejection of this principle is thus a decisive rejection of the Cartesian understanding of the world, and, to orthodox Cartesians, bordering on total sceptic-ism about our knowledge of the world; a step which Hume had already taken.
2. App.A. "ANIMA BRUTORUM" - "Peritne una cum corpore haec animula?" Palmer, op cit pp.114-5.
3. App.A. "ANIMAE SEDES" - "Si animae omnes similes prorsus dicantur, ingeniorum diversitatis causam sufficientem reddet diversa corporum organizatio. Humana anima in Ostreae cerebro incarcerata unquamne ad veritates Metaphysicas assurgeret?"
4. App.A. "UNIO CORPORIS ET ANIMAE"
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"ANIMAE ORIGO".

The theses, full of Bonnet's doctrine, and often his very words, were duly dubmitted to the ecclesiastical censor, and, surprisingly enough, passed without criticism. The official concerned was even complimentary. "Sir, I am pleased with your philosophy: had it been such when I was a student, I should have applied to it with better success". [1.] On March 20th, 1771 the public defence of the theses passed off without event. But the quiet did not last. Even within the University of Douay there were those who would not tolerate such a wholesale adoption of modern principles. M. Ernotte, the principal of the College du Roi had claimed that "... les sentiments anciens sont encore suivis ici par quelques reguliers.." [2.] Among these "reguliers" were the English Franciscans of St. Bonaventure's, Douay; their Professor of Philosophy, William Pilling, was a staunch proponent of traditional scholasticism, a member of that "tribe of Aristotle" so roundly condemned by Berington. [3.] He and others like him attacked the theses, and by August the murmurs of disapproval had come to the attention of the Bishop of Arras, in whose diocese Douay lay. [4.]

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1. Joseph Berington "A Letter to the Rt.Revd.John Douglass" (London 1797), p.3. The verbal reminiscences of Bonnet, and even direct quotations make it clear that the theses were composed with Bonnet's works, and probably the preface to the "Contemplation" in particular, open before Berington. Thus compare the passage cited in note (99) with Bonnet's "... I observe, first, that I do not affirm .. that all souls are perfectly similar. I only advance, that, supposing them so, organization alone would be sufficient to place variations between them ... Would the human soul, if placed in the brain of an oyster, ever acquire notions of morality and metaphysics". op cit pp.xlvi-xlvii. Such borrowings could be demonstrated throughout the thesis.

2. Mahieu, op cit. p.74

3. Gillow (v) p.312-3. Kirk "Pilling, William Leo. "For Berington's opinion of Pilling's abilities and training, see "Reflections addressed to the Revd. John Hawkins" (Birming 1785) pp.14-17.

4. Throck Mss. Mann to Berington, August 13th, 1771

On 6th August 1771, Berington attempted to forestall trouble by writing a submissive letter to the Bishop, offering to "explain or retract" any parts of his theses judged objectionable.[1] The gesture came too late. On August 7th, a frantic note arrived at Douay from Alban Butler. Butler, at this time President of the English College at St. Omers, served also as Grand Vicar to the Bishop of Arras. He wrote that the Bishop was "extremely exasperated", and was demanding Berington's instant suspension from all posts of authority.

"... On my knees to you and Mr. Berington I beg he goes immediately out of the diocese... the least dispute upon any point may well be fatal in a country where lettres de cachet are as easily served up as a dish of coffee." Butler ordered that any heretical books being read in the college, and especially any by Locke and Bonnet, should be collected up and put safely under lock and key in "hell" till a threatened Episcopal inspection should be over. The letter concludes on the same frantic note - ".. It is the most unlucky ac(ci)dent yt ever befell A.M. since its establishment. To have it hush'd as much as possible, is now my endeavour. A public censure of the F(rench) clergy would be carried from one Polar circle to another & be re(co)rded in ye annals of ye C(hurch) with names to ye end of time".[2]

Butler's reaction, extreme as it was, is easily understood.

A member of that generation of Catholics who, like Challoner, could

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1. Tichbourne Blount Diary (hereafter T. B. DIARY) Mss p.13. Transcripts of this diary were kindly supplied to me by Mr. Philip Harris under whose supervision the Mss is being prepared for publication by C.R.S.

2. A.A.W. (46) Douay Papers, Alban Buter to H. T. Blount, August 7th, 1771.

remember the accusations of Jansenism levelled against the College at Douay earlier in the century, he shared his contemporaries' almost morbid fear of the brand of heterodoxy or innovation. To this spectre of a dead controversy must be attributed his concern for the good name of "Alma Mater", his anxiety to hush the matter, and his preposterous conviction that the disgrace would be recorded "... in the annals of the C(hurch) with names to the end of time"."

At any rate, Berington hastily packed his bags, and retired to Liège to lie low for a month.[1] A few days later the Bishop of Arras himself wrote to Henry Tichbourne Blount, President of Douay, assuring him that Berington's departure was quite unnecessary. He had not demanded, he explained, that Berington should resign his post immediately, but merely that he should be replaced as Professor at the end of the academic year. Moreover, any suggestion of his obtaining a lettre de cachet against Berington was, he declared, quite preposterous. He was perfectly satisfied of Berington's good faith and intentions, though he felt obliged to censure the theses, as they had been the occasion of public scandal.[2].

The affair, then, quickly blew over, the Bishop contenting himself with circulating a letter to the Professors of Philosophy and Theology in his diocese, indicating Berington's errors. The delinquent himself returned to Douay in September, and resumed his post.

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1. T. B. DIARY, p.13.

2. B.A.A., c.68. A copy of the letter of the Bishop of Arras to Blount, 13th August 1771 (French).

Who, then, had objected to the theses, and why? The chief villain of the piece was, by common consent, Alban Butler. The Bishop of Arras, the President of Douay, Abbé Mann and Joseph Berington agreed that the whole incident, if not initiated by, had at least been exaggerated out of all proportion by ".. our poor, well-meaning .. but really very indiscreet friend". [1.] A French Bishop involved in the dispute informed Charles Butler, his uncle's biographer, that the old man had ".. shown too much vivacity on that occasion". [2.] But Butler was not alone in his opposition. Both in France and England the theses had provoked a hostile reaction. The French criticism need not concern us here, [3.] but that of Berington's English opponents is relevant. Butler headed a group of conservatives which included Robert Bannister, one time Professor of Philosophy at Douay. William Pilling, Professor at St. Bonaventure's, and Bishop Challoner, who shared his old friend's fear of innovation. [4.] Both Bannister and Pilling were to emerge as trenchant critics of the attempted liberalization of English Catholicism, [5.] and their opposition can be taken as a significant indication of the growing rift within it. It is worthwhile, therefore

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1. B.A.A. c 684. A.A.W. Paris Papers, vol.(i), H. T. Blount to Dr. Howard at Paris, August 13th, 1771 (whence quotation in the text). Throck Mss. Mann to Berington, Dec.16th, 1771. A.A.W. (48) Douay Papers. Berington to Bp. Talbot, October 27th, 1771. "Mr. Alban Butler, the great actor throughout..."

2. C. Butler, Works (iii) p.567-8.

3. The Bp. of Arras' objections were drawn up by a M. De Chevreuil and M. Moreau de la Grave, his Grand Vicar (Throck Mss. Mann to Berington, Feb. 8th, 1773). According to Butler and Mann, however, many French clergy beyond and within the diocese were opposed to the theses.
A. A. W.(48) Butler to Blount, August 7th, 1771.
Throck Mss. Mann to Berington, August 13th, 1771.

4. Throck. Mss., Mann to Berington, August 13th, 1771.
Mann to Berington, June 10th, 1774.
B.A.A. c 685. Needham to Berington, Jan. 2nd, 1772.

5. Bernard Ward "Dawn of the Catholic Revival in England"(London 1909) (i) 147,174,175,208,213,214.(ii) 77,78. Oscott Books (II)2665,2666.
Ushaw College Magazine (xiv)(1904) p.129.
Gillow (i) pp.123-125.

examining more closely the criticisms which were levelled against the offending theses, and the defense offered by Berington and his supporters.

Orthodox concern centred round the "materialist" and "fatalist" tendencies of the theses, and on Berington's attack on scholasticism. A latin "Comonitory Pastoral" from the Bishop of Arras to Berington preserved in the Westminster Archives lists the main objections raised by orthodox critics.[1.] The document, in the drafting of which Butler possibly had a hand,[2.] complained of Berington's sweeping contempt for the 'Schools', a contempt ".. which neither befits your youth nor benefits your religion.." and denounced as intolerable his praise of an "enemy of religion", the "Genevan medic", Bonnet. It condemned Berington's denial of innate ideas, his assertion of the dependence of the mind on sensation for all its ideas, and any suggestion that animals have souls, as threatening the uniqueness of human nature. Berington's approval of Leibnitz's "preestablished harmony" was attacked as destructive of human liberty, and his support for the notion of "preexistent germs" (including the soul) declared contrary to Catholic teaching..

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1. A.A.W. (48) Douay Papers, Commonitio Pastoralis Illme ac Rmi Domini Episcopi Atrebatensis a D.Josephum Berington in Collegio Anglorum Daucena Philosophia Professorum...(sic) An incomplete Mss copy, clearly intended for printing, wrongly dated in a modern hand "19th March 1771".

2. My reasons for thinking this include the many allegations of Butler's involvement in the condemnation by the Bishop of Arras (above, p87) the references in the Commonitio to the duties and responsibilities of English missioners, which suggest an English writer rather than a French, and the specific condemnation in the Commonitio of Leibnitz and Wolfe - both pet hates of Butler's, C. Butler, Works (iii), p.495.

Berington's reaction to all this was not likely to improve matters. He wrote submissively enough, indeed, to the Bishop of Arras, but in practice he declined giving an unqualified retraction, and his letters to the irate Bishop James Talbot, assistant to Challoner in the London District, reveal a far from submissive frame of mind. He had taught nothing, he claimed, but what was ".. universally maintained in every university & College of Christendom, where reason has penetrated". His opponents were, according to him, ignorant zealots -

"I'm convinced not one in ten of those why cry out against me, understand the least of the matter ..." [1.]

He was encouraged in his truculence by the support and applause of Mann and Needham. Abbé Mann was particularly vehement -

"Your severe, but just strictures on the Aristotelian Logick.. are what I look upon as a principal cause of the outcry against your ingenious Theses; it was very natural it should cause such an effect upon such Pseudo-Philosophers as the Pillings &c &c &c, where noise and ill-manners hold the place of Reason". [2.] He dropped dark hints of plots and counter plots against Berington, and attributed the episcopal censure of the theses to "Ignorance, Spite or Malice .." adding that " .. in Doctor Albanus (Butler) Iam certain 'tis not Ignorance, I shall leave it to others to qualify". [3.] Needham wrote to assure Berington of the support of the ".. first Philosophers of this age, who are at the same time the supporters of revealed Religion, F. Boscovitch, who holds the chair of Philosophy at Pavia,

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1. T. B. DIARY, p.13.
   A.A.W. (48) Douay Papers, Berington to Talbot, October 10th, 1771.
2. Throck. Mss. Mann to Berington, August 13th, 1771.
3. Throck. Mss. Mann to Berington, December 16th, 1771.

the F. F. Jaquier & le Seur, who are professors in the colleges of the Sapienza at Rome, Mr. Sigorgna, first grand vicar of the Bishopric at Macon .." [1]. All this was heady wine for a young man, and hardly likely to instil respect for the "pretended horrors" of his elderly critics.

Not, however, that even Needham's support was total. Quite apart from the philosophical points on which they dissented from him, [2]. both Mann and Needham thought Berington should have been more guarded in his language -

".. men are for the most part governed by words, to which they have been long accustomed, than by ideas which they do not understand". He should, therefore, have avoided praise of heterdox philosophers, and have clothed his ideas in familiar language, carefully glossed. [3], In Mann at least this appeal for moderation went deeper. He maintained a correspondence with Berington for some years after the dispute had ended, and his letters grew increasingly critical of Berington's adherence to Bonnet. Mann became convinced that the Genevan was a materialist and a determinist, and attempted to wean his young friend from so tainted a fountain.[4]. The older man's

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1. B.A.A. c 685 (a) Needham to Berington, December 2nd, 1771.

2. Neither Needham nor Mann accepted the notion of "preexistent germs" in the sense employed by Bonnet and Berington; Needham indeed, was a believer in the "Spontaneous generation" of physical germs - cf. Emile Brehier History of Philosophy, Vol.V. The Eighteenth Century (Chicago, 1967). Mann, and probably Needham, rejected the notion that all souls were exactly alike, a fundamental part of the Sensationalist philosophy (note 70 above)

3. B.A.A. c 685 (a) Needham to Berington, Jan. 2nd, 1772.

4. Thus his first letter to Berington on the subject has ".. M.De Buffon ... is a Deist, to say no worse .. M.Bonnet is much more the Amiable Philosopher but .. (his).. system does not satisfy me." By Feb.8th, 1773, he is convinced that "Bonnet's Principles destroy all real Liberty, & consequently all real Religion".

natural caution was exacerbated by the accusations of heresy and materialism which were levelled against him as a result of his support of Berington, whom he anxiously urged to permit him to publish, in a forthcoming work, a note disowning Bonnet on Berington's behalf.[1.] Berington's steady refusal of this request provoked some plain speech - "Some of those who studied Philosophy under you, have assured me that there is no doubt but you taught them Bonnet's Principles purely and simply at least as you understood them. Both myself and many others who have perused Bonnet's works, judge them to induce a perfect and universal Fatalism throughout all Beings ..".[2.] In fact, convinced of Bonnet's materialism, Berington did eventually capitulate, and publicly renounced his former idol,[3.] but his reluctance to do so is a significant indication of his commitment to the cause of Enlightenment.

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1. Throck. Mss. Mann to Berington, Feb.8th, 1773

2. Throck. Mss. Mann to Berington, March 6th, 1776.

3. Berington's public renunciation came in 1776, in the course of a controversy he had with Joseph Priestley on the subject of the latter's reissue of Hartley's "Theory of the Human Mind". Berington attacked Hartley's and Priestley's materialism, comparing them to that of 'Mr. Bonnet of Geneva' - Berington "Letters on Materialism and Hartley's Theory of the Human Mind, addressed to Dr. Priestley, F.R.S." (London 1776) p.12. "I began to suspect some years ago, when I was almost an enthusiastic admirer of the Genevan Philosopher, that such principles were not to be admitted with an implicit confidence". On p.11, he accuses Bonnet's works of inculcating the view that "... every mental process is a mechanical effect, and therefore that all free election in men is a chimerical and usurped prerogative ...".
+ See Chapter III below.

Mann's reaction to accusations of heterodoxy was to protest his true faith and renounce the offending opinions: Berington's response, as he informed an infuriated James Talbot, was a resolve ".. to publish an explanation of .. the thesis .. to justify the doctrine there advanced.." and to refuse to withdraw a syllable till convinced of his error by those qualified for the task. [1].

This quite fundamental difference of approach in two men equally suspect to Conservative eyes is, at the risk of tedium, worth insisting upon, and reflects more than a simple matter of temperament. Mann and Needham were indeed "moderns" in their voracious scientific and philosophical curiosity, their willingness to collaborate in matters not touching faith with those outside the church, and their genuine if limited openness to new ideas. But they stood, nevertheless, firmly within the pale of orthodoxy, and were nervous of notoriety. Needham's resolve not to have, even "interiourly" ideas in any way contrary to Catholic teaching is relevant here, and very different from the self-assured acidity with which Berington turned on his attackers, provoking from the normally mild Bishop Talbot a charge of "indecent sneers". [2]. His contempt for everything and everyone 'unenlightened', his conviction that a new age was dawning, his desire to be in the van of its prophets, (somewhat belated in the 1770's!!); these were to be the distinguishing marks of the emerging "liberal" party in the English Catholic disputes of the next twenty years. Already such

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1. A.A.W. (48) Douay Papers, Berington to Talbot, Oct.27th, 1771
2. ibid.,

attitudes were moulding the travel diaries of Henry Swinburne; the cast of mind was, of course, common to all "illuminati", and Berington might well have imbibed it from his idol, Bonnet. The preface to the latter's "Contemplation of Nature" had contained the declaration that ".. a dangerous truth is not the less a truth for being a dangerous one .. and our conceptions, which are not able to change the state of things, should be conformable to it".[1] In England, Joseph Priestley enshrined that principle of "Truth at all costs" in his treatise on "Free Inquiry", and it was the distinguishing mark of all who aspired to "liberality" that they subscribed to it.[2] For Berington, then, the real issue at Douay lay, not between Cartesians and Empiricists, between Fatalism and Libertarianism, but between Catholics prepared to welcome and adopt new ways of thought, to share the aims and the attitudes of the Enlightenment, even when they received their authoritative expression in the works of heretics and infidels, and those who, in opposition, set their faces against the "betrayal" of traditional values and ways of thought, the conservative patrimony of English Catholicism.

In April 1772, the Bishop of Arras sent one of his clergy, M. Moreau de la Grave, to ascertain Berington's views on the matters treated in his theses. The interview passed off to M. Moreau's satisfaction, and he departed assured of the English Philosopher's orthodoxy.[3] By this time, however, the dispute had been virtually

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1. Charles Bonnet, op.cit. p.liii

2. Joseph Priestley, "The Importance and extent of Free Inquiry in matters of Religion ..." (Birmingham 1785) G. M. Young, Last Essays (London 1950) p.207-8

3. T. B. DIARY, p.22 (29th April 1772)

forgotten, and the Bishop did not even trouble to read the account of the interview.[1.] In the following September, Berington left for the English mission, settling first with his family at Winsley, and then at Wolverhampton, in the Middle District.[2.] He was, by his own assessment, a wiser and sadder man:-

> "Experience has now taught me how cautious and circumspect that Man must necessarily be, not to give offense (sic), and to secure his own peaceful well-being, who dares to deviate from old maxims, how unreasonable soever, and the beaten Track of College Principles".[3.]

Thus unrepentant, and convinced of the justice of his cause, he shook the dust of Douay off his feet. Quite clearly, he thought of himself as a standard-bearer for the cause of truth and progress against reactionary "veterans" like Butler. He nursed also, a conviction that an unjust slur had been cast upon his orthodoxy, a conviction which never left him, and which helped harden his attitude towards orthodox criticism of his writings in the disputes which were to follow.[4.]

He returned to an English mission ruled by "veterans"; by Challoner, who had joined in the general "cry" against his theses, by Talbot who had rebuked him for his insolence to authority. Those authorities, for their part, may well have experience a sense of relief in having this acid-tongued, self confident young man safely employed among the metal-workers of the Black Country; but satisfaction, if satisfaction they felt, would have been premature.

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1. Berington, "Letter to Bp. Douglass", p.5.
2. Gillow (i) p.189
3. B.A.A., c.685(a) Berington to Needham, Jan.10th(16th) 1772
4. Berington, "Letter to Bp. Douglass", p.4-6

Joseph Berington and the English Catholic

Cisalpine movement.

1772 - 1803

Chapter III. THE REPUBLIC OF LETTERS

"A Roman Catholic writer, attached to his religion, but unshackled in his thoughts, and free in his expressions, is, in this country, rather a new character in the republic of letters". 1a.

"As if Religion were intended
For nothing else but to be mended". 1b.

The move from Douay to Winsley, from philosophical debate to the daily round of a family chaplain, meant more than a change in occupation. [2.] It involved a narrowing of vision. English Catholics had recently been plagued by a series of petty persecutions concentrated in the London area. [3.] A number of priests were brought to trial by a professional informer and one was sentenced to perpetual imprisonment.[4.] The spate of prosecutions, being discouraged by the authorities, quickly dried up: but the natural timidity of Catholic leaders was increased by the episode. Bishop Walmesley, commenting in 1771 on the Fifth Age of the Apocalypse, noted the abatement of persecution, penal statutes "less attended to", and decreasing rigour in the law; he nevertheless conceived the lull to be purely temporary; and gloomily prognosticated "the approaching effusion of

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1a. Joseph Berington "A History of the Lives of Abeillard and Heloisa .. with their original letters" (Birmingham 1787), p.xxx.

1b. Samuel Butler, Hudibras I(i) 11.205-6.

2. For Berington's movements at this time Catholic Miscellany and Monthly Repository of Information, IX (1828), pp.221 ff. (Memoir by J. Kirk).

3. E. Burton Life and Times of Bishop Challenor (London, 1909) (ii) pp.85-96. J. Barnard, Life of the Venerable and R. R. Richard Challenor, D.D. (London 1784), pp.155-196. For a rare example of interference with Catholics outside London at this time, East Riding Record Office (= Beverley), DDEV/68 it.248, p.94.

4. The Revd. John Baptist Maloney, an Irishman working on the London mission. His sentence was later commuted to banishment.

the fifth Vial" in wrath and perdition. [1.] A Catholic apologist of the time expressed the conviction that it was "evident to every attentive person, that the state of popery in England is very contemptible and low". [2.] In such a world there was little scope for displays of 'liberality', and the irritation displayed by Bishop Talbot in his correspondence with Berington over the ill-fated Theses [3.] may well have reflected the impatience of a harassed administrator with one whom he considered to be a callow intellectual out to shock. [4.] Abbe Mann's forebodings that the return to England would make Douay University's "greatest object ... neglect (his) application to ... Philosophical Studies" bade fair to be fulfilled. [5.]

Outside the catholic community, however, the England of the 1770's was astir with liberal causes, particularly in the field of religious toleration. This movement was strongly represented within the Established Church, but its spearhead lay among the Rational Dissenters. By the 1770's there existed among the English Presbyterians a solid phalanx of theological and

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1. (Bp. Charles Walmesley). The General History of the Christian Church, from her birth to her final triumphant state in Heaven, chiefly deduced from the Apocalypse of St. John the Apostle. By Signor Pastorini , (3rd Ed. Dublin, 1794, First published 1771) pp.442-448.

2. James Usher A Free Examination of the Common Methods employed to prevent the growth of Popery (London 1766), p.ii.

3. Chapter II above, text and notes, p 92

4. Talbot was himself tried for his priesthood during the "persecution", Barnard op.cit., pp.182ff.

5. Throck.Mss. Mann to Berington, Feb. 8th, 1773.

and political radicals. [1.] The most prominent of the dissenting leaders was Joseph Priestley, and his preoccupations typify the movement as a whole. [2.] His deepest conviction was the inevitability of the progress of Truth, and the duty of all thinking men to further that progress fearlessly. "Truth", he wrote, "will always have an infinite advantage over error, if free scope be given to inquiry". [3.] "Free Inquiry" was of the essence: only by inquiry could rational conviction be achieved, and only by rational conviction were we entitled to any belief. The principle was universal - creeds and legal restrictions were as absurd and pernicious in religion as in science or philosophy. Any organisation which impeded the free search for truth was anti-Christian, whether it be the Inquisition which had condemned Galileo, or the Church of England which demanded subscription to its Articles. [4.] Priestley, therefore, threw himself whole-heartedly into the campaign for toleration and the abolition of subscription to the Articles. [5.] Within the established church,

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1. Anthony Lincoln Some Political and Social Ideas of English Dissent. (Cambridge 1938) U. Henriques Religious Toleration in England, 1787 - 1833 (London 1961). H. Mclachlan, English Education Under the Test Acts; Being a History of the Nonconformist Academies, 1662-1820 (1931).

2. Joseph Priestley Memoirs .. to the year 1795 .. with a continuation to the time of his decease, by his son. (London 1806) An expanded version, with much correspondence, forms Vol.I (in two parts) of the collected edition of Priestley's Works (=Works) (London 1831), Ed. by J. Rutt. Anne Holt, Life of Joseph Priestley (Oxford 1931), Basil Willey The Eighteenth Century Background (Penguin books 1962), Ch. 10.

3. Priestley The Importance and Extent of Free Inquiry in matters of Religion (First published 1785) in Works XV, p.76.

4. Henriques, op.cit. p.37

5. Dissenting ministers were obliged to subscribe the Articles.

the reformers were led by Archdeacon Francis Blackburne of Cleveland. In 1766 Blackburne published 'The Confessional' in which he argued that any Protestant church which imposed on its ministers and members any other standard of belief than the Scriptures was guilty of "an unwarrantable interference with rights or private judgment which are manifestly secured to every individual by the scriptural terms of Christian liberty, and therebye contradicting the original principles of the Protestant Reformation". [1.] This book sparked off a controversy on clerical subscription which reached a disastrous climax in February 1772 with the presentation of the Feathers Tavern Petition to Parliament. The Petition, moving the abolition of Subscription, was greeted with horror by churchmen like Parson Cole, who thought it " .. an infidel and libertine design to overthrow religion", and its clerical signatories either ".. blind to their own interest, or abandoned to the cause of Christianity". [2.] Influential liberals like Bishop Law, Richard Watson and William Paley, found that in this matter they were "too poor to keep a conscience", and did not sign it. [3.] The Petition was opposed by Lord North and Edmund Burke, and it was known that George III disapproved of it. Rejection was, in these circumstances, inevitable, with highly damaging consequences for the reform movement within the

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1. Francis Blackburne The Confessional: or, a Full and Free INQUIRY into the right, utility, edification, and successs, of establishing systematical confessions of Faith in Protestant Churches. (3rd ed. London 1770), pp.50-51.

2. William Cole to Charles Bedingfield (a Recollet friat) June 7th, 1771, quoted from BM Cole Mss by Rutt in Priestley Works, I (i) pp.140-1.

3. W.E.H. Lecky History of England in the 18th Century (Cabinet ed.1892) (iv) pp.292-8. Both Watson and Paley wrote anonymously in support of the Petition.

Establishment.[1.] A large number of the Feathers Tavern Petitioners, benificed clergy who held advanced Socinian opinions, now found their position untenable: many, like Theophilus Lindsey, Vicar of Cleveland, and John Jebb of Cambridge, left the Church of England. The Secessionists weakened the reform movement within the State church, because they were taken to reveal its overall Socinian and Deistical tendencies.[2.] They added new force and urgency to the campaign for the relief of Dissenting ministers from Subscription to the Articles.[3.]

Clearly, Catholics had an interest in any movement which promoted the spirit of toleration. Equally clearly, this particular movement had its difficulties for them. Parson Cole could denounce the petition to his Catholic friends, confident of their reprobation of its tendencies towards creedless heterdoxy.[4.] Some papists, nevertheless, were prepared to applaud any such movement, and even to claim a similar "liberality" for themselves. James Usher, in 1766, defended the principle of liberty of conscience, echoed Priestley's insistence on reason and the search for knowledge as the "guardian of truth", and claimed that in Catholic countries true

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1. Holt, op.cit. p.55f. Henriques op.cit. pp.54f. Norman Sykes Church and State in England in the 18th Century, (Cambridge 1934) pp.379f. Gerald Cragg, Reason and Authority in the 18th Century (Cambridge 1964) pp.250f. Leslie Stephen History of English Thought in the 18th Century (London 1876), I. viii. sect. 53-9.

2. J. H. Overton and F. Relton The English Church from the Accession of George I to the end of the 18th Century (London 1906) p.211. Henriques op.cit. p.55.

3. Lecky, loc.cit., The main opposition came from the Bishops.

4. above, p99 cf. B.M.Add.Mss.5826/25b, Alban Butler to William Cole, Feb.28th, 1766.

learning flourished, while priests laboured at "the spring-head" of this liberal tide. [1.]

His protestations fell on sceptical ears. Far from extending their liberality to Papists, the Tavern Petitioners saw in Catholicism the last bastion of ignorance, superstition, and bigotry. The first edition of the Confessional lamented that the "zeal and vigilance of pastors and people ... against popery and popish emissaries, is visibly declined". [2.] Blackburne's Archdiaconal charges in 1765-6 warned against the "progress and increase of this dangerous superstition", which cloaked its malignity under a moderate front. [3.] In 1765 the translator of Mosheim, Archibald Maclaine, delivered himself of a footnote to the effect that the "improvements in science, that characterize the last and the present age, seem to render a relapse into Romish superstition morally impossible". [4.] From his "Confessional" seat Blackburne denied that 'Enlightenment' could make any substantial change in Catholic beliefs - the evidence suggested, he argued, that though Enlightenment made many sceptics in Popish states, nevertheless in "a melancholy or a departing hour" such sceptics tended to fall back on the false consolations of popish superstition. [5.] Maclain had

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2. Blackburne, "Confessional", p.xcvii.

1. Usher, op.cit. pp.4,12.

3. Blackburne, Considerations on the present state of the controversy between the Protestants and the Papists of Great Britain .... being the substance of Two Discourses delivered to the Clergy of the Archdeaconry of Cleveland in the years 1765 and 1766. in The Works, Theological and Miscellaneous .. of Francis Blackburne, M.A. (Cambridge 1804) (= Works). IV, pp.8,12.

4. An Ecclesiastical History .. by the late learned John Laurence Mosheim, D.D. Translated by Archibald Maclaine, D.D. (3rd edition, 1790) VI, p.45 (1765 Ed. II, p.573)

5. Confessional, pp.Lxxii - lxxiii.

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2. Blackburne, "Confessional", p.xcvii.

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5. Confessional, pp.Lxxii - lxxiii.

spoken of men like Boscovich who had "dared to hold up the lamp of science, without feeling the rigour of the inquisition" of the "extremely numerous" class of catholics "neither thorough Papists nor entire Protestants", who secretly rejected the abuses of Popery "without thinking them sufficient to justify a separation"; he pointed to the banishment of the Jesuits from France, Spain, and Portugal, the decline of "the saintly legend", the increasing use of the Scriptures in Popish lands, and the suppression or curtailing of the Inquisition, as signs that "the essential spirit of Popery ... a spirit of blind submission and superstition in its members, is rather losing than gaining ground, even in the countries that still profess the religion of Rome".[1] For Blackburn, nothing short of an explicit rejection of errors and anti-social political doctrines by the Church of Rome would suffice. And in particular he asked "Have the papists of Great Britain ... given the King and his Government the security of their allegiance?" Blackburne, indeed, had noted the signs of "Enlightenment" among English Catholics, and as early as 1749 had acknowledged the existence of papists of "good sense and liberal minds".[2] But these were laymen; for him the rulers of Catholic thought were priests and Jesuits; and priests and Jesuits were incorrigably unenlightened. To these the laity must "cringe .. and pay .. homage". "Have not a majority of English papists of rank and fortune Jesuits in their houses, as directors of their consciences?" The order of the day then was "vigilance" against these "dangerous inmates" this "malignant party", lest they, having "strengthened their hands with new converts", wrest from the nation "our inestimable rights and liberties civil and religious".[3]

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1. Maclaine, op.cit. VI, pp.45-60.
2. Erasmus's preface .. to .. the Gospel of St. Matthew .. to which is prefixed A Preliminary Discourse addressed to the Roman Catholic Gentry and Laity of Great Britain.(First publ.1749) in Works I,p.28.
3. Ibid, p.33. Confessional, pp.xcix - c.

Blackburne's preposterous jeremiads were credited by the majority of the reforming parsons and ministers in his circle.[1.] The great exception was Joseph Priestley. For him the Papacy was "an old and dying Lion" not to be feared; commenting in 1768 on Blackburne's Charges, he told Thomas Hollis that "I frankly own I do not see any danger we are in from the Papists".[2.] So singular indeed was Priestley in his opinion, that he found it necessary in 1769 to reassure Blackburne of the "soundness " of the Warrington Academy by informing him that he alone of all the staff there supported toleration of Catholics.[3.] The unliklihood of any Roman Catholic, much less a priest, being allowed to take his place among these apostles of liberality was shown in 1769, when two Catholic laymen contacted Priestley to acquaint him of their admiration for his writings and the educational system at Warrington.[4.] Priestley's circle solemnly warned him against such dangerous friendships, and he was obliged to reassure them of his innocence of acquaintance with "a single person of that persuasion" and his lifelong "abhorrence and contempt" of them. Nothing more came of the letters.[5.]

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1. Priestley, Works I (i). p.96 n.

2. ibid, loc.cit. Priestley to Hollis, Nov. 1, 1766

3. ibid, p.106. Priestley to Lindsey, Jan 18, 1770.

4. opcit., p.104. Priestley to Lindsey, Dec.18, 1769: p.106, Same to same Jan.18, 1770. The two Roman Catholics - "the Berkeleys" - are probably Robert and John Berkeley of Spetchley in Worcestershire. Robert's liberal sympathies emerged clearly in the Committee disputes. cf. A. M. Hodgson "The Berkeley Family of Spetchley Park", in Worcestershire Recusant, no.14, pp.22-3.

5. Priestley, op.cit., pp.104-106.

It was metaphysics, appropriately enough, which provided Berington with an opportunity for closer contact with Priestley. One of the distinguishing features of the latter's intellectual world was the rejection of the Cartesian concept of the soul. For him man was a unity, thinking matter, whose hope for eternal life lay not in an immortal soul, but in the gracious promise of bodily resurrection.[1.] Cartesians and orthodox disciples of Locke saw matter as static, incapable of self-motion; the soul, on this reading of things, became a necessary hypothesis to explain the liveliness of the living.[2.] Berington had been accused of heresy because, in allowing, with Needham, Boscovich, and the rest of the Catholic Liberals, an "essential activity" to matter, he had opened the door to a materialist theory of human nature. This further step was taken in France by infidels like Holbach and La Mettrie, and in England by Joseph Priestley, who thought it not merely compatible with Christianity, but a major apologetic weapon.[3.] Convinced equally of the unity of all truth and the permanent value of the advances made in science and philosophy throughout Europe, he believed that the rejection of Christianity by so many of the Enlightened was in reality a rejection of corrupt accretions on the true faith - the rags of popery.[4.] Among these non-scriptural intrusions was the pagan

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1. Priestley Disquisitions relating to Matter and Spirit (2nd ed. Birmingham 1782). Cf. the dedications to both volumes, especially that in vol.2 (to John Jebb) on the "glorious system" to which "we belong" (my underlining). Willey, op.cit. Francis Blackburne A Short .. View of the Controversy concerning an Intermediate State and the separate existence of the soul .. (London 1765)
2. Ch. II, above.
3. Emile Brehier History of Philosophy. V. The 18th Century (Chicago 1967) pp.127 ff. B. Willey, op.cit pp.166-174
4. Priestley, A History of the Corruptions of Christianity (First pub. 1782) in Works, V. And cf. Willey, op.cit. p.166.

doctrine of the immortal soul. Remove such stumbling-blocks, and the pure Gospel light could not but dazzle all true seekers. In 1774 Priestley visited Paris, and was feted in the salons. Something of an innocent abroad, he recorded the amazement of Baron d'Holbach and his atheistical friends that anyone so enlightened as he evidently was could remain a Christian: the experience strengthened his conviction that the 'Philosophical Unbelievers' rejected, not true Christianity, but the obscurantism which was so often mistaken for it.[1.] While in Paris, Priestley also became friendly with a number of Catholic liberals, including Boscovich, whose theory of the dynamism of nature - "this scheme of the immateriality of matter" - deeply interested him.[2.] The friendship was to create an abiding impression of Catholic liberality; "of such men", he commented, "Christianity may justly make her boast".[3.]

In the same year Priestley published an attack on the Scottish 'Commonsense' Philosophers. The book was a rehersal of all his philosophical convictions. He attacked the notion of "natural and original judgements", (the variety of the theory of innate ideas defended by the Scottish Philosophers).[4.] He expounded a Lockeian theory of ideas based on sense-experience, which he had derived from the work of David Hartley,[5.] En passant he argued that Reid, Beattie and Oswald, by rejecting rational philosophy in favour of "implicit faith" in so-called innate ideas had opened the door to the growth of Popery, which would by this

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1. Holt, op.cit. pp.92-4: Priestley Works I (i) pp.199,254, X. p.482: XV.pp.366-7.

2. Priestley The History and Present State of Discoveries Relating to Vision, Light and Colours (London 1772) pp.390-2.

3. Priestley Works, XV. p.367

4. Priestley An Examination of Dr. Reid's Inquiry into the Human Mind.. (London 1774) On the Common-sense schools see S.A.Grave, The Scottish Philosophy of Common Sense(Oxford 1960) Frederick Copleston A History of Philosophy, V.(Image Books,1964) Ch.18

means propogate doctrine "for which the powers of reason had proved insufficient". [1.] By way of contrast, he praised infidel writers like Hume, who had forced Christians to examine and rationalize their Christianity, thereby "enabling it to triumph over all opposition". "Things are now in such a train", he wrote, "that infidelity will have every day less and less to carp at in Christianity, till at length its excellence and divine authority will be universally acknowledged". [2.] On March 21st,1775 Berington wrote to Priestley "Tho' quite astranger" [3.] congratulating him on his performance of "so meritous and important a task". He went on, in nine closely written pages, to a criticism of "some scattered notions which do not please me; some I judge of dangerous tendency, some only false in Theology or Philosophy". Basically, Berington criticized three aspects of Priestley's book - its extreme Sensationalist epistemology: the Necessitarian and Materialist conclusions drawn from this: and Priestley's remarks on Roman Catholicism. The first two points were developed later in print, and need not be noticed here: the third is worth comment. [4.] Berington writing '<u>in persona Protestantis</u>' assured Priestley that, having "often conversed with the learned and sensible of that persuasion at home and abroad", he was convinced that Catholics did not rest their beliefs on "implicit confidence" in the word of

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1. <u>ibid</u>., pp.159-60. 200-2.
2. <u>ibid</u>., pp.192-4.
3. BAA C.685 (b). Berington to Priestley, March 21, 1775.
4. Below, pp 109-115.

priests, as Priestley had suggested, and were an unjustly insulted and injured body of men.

Priestley's reply was courteous but brief: he declined entering into any correspondence about his book "because it is too long for a letter". He took up, however, Berington's point about the Roman Catholics, and assured him that his detestation was not of Catholics, but of their "peculiar system of faith"; in this he made no distinction between Catholics and members of the Established Church - "I also think very ill of many things in the Church of English (sic) tho' I have always had even a strict friendship with several members of it". [1.]

In the same year Priestley published a shortened edition of David Hartley's "Observations on Man" with a number of preliminary essays by himself. [2.] The book was both an act of pietas, and an attempt to propogate Hartley's associationalist psychology, which formed a satisfactory basis for his materialist and determinist view of human nature. [3.] In the first of his essays, Priestley declared that he was "rather inclined to think that ... man does not consist of two principles, so essentially different from one another as matter and spirit, which are always described as having not one common property, by means of which they can effect or act upon each other ... I rather think that the whole man is of some uniform composition, and that the property of perception, as well as the other powers that are termed mental, is the result,

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1. Throck Mss. Priestley to Berington, 2nd (?) April, 1775.

2. Priestley Hartley's Theory of the Human Mind on the Principles of the Association of Ideas; with Essays relating to the subject of it. (2nd Ed. London, 1790).

3. Willey, op.cit., pp.133ff, 167ff.

(whether necessary or not) of such an organical structure as that of the brain". [1.] The hope of immortality was part of revealed, not natural religion. [2.]

The book was enthusiastically received by the London Review: "Happy the Philosopher who hath proceeded so far as to discover the impotence of natural knowledge, and to make timely reliance on that wisdom which surpasses all understanding". [3.] A lengthy and acrimonious correspondence on materialism ensued [4.] in which Berington engaged for the first time on August 20th, 1775. He censured Priestley's book as "injurious to the great cause of social felicity, morality", rendering natural religion "a baseless fabrick"; and he undertook to prove "by pure philosophy alone, that the soul of man is naturally indestructible and that the whole man as a moral agent must survive the grave, if there be a God ..." [5.] Berington's contributions to the Review controversy form a quite developed self portrait, a useful indication of the trend of his thinking at this time. He presents himself as a member of the European Enlightenment, casting a contemptuous eye on those who have not, as he has, an acquaintance with the latest continental philosophers. [6.] He is a man of cool reason, too

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1. Hartley's Theory, p.xxiii.
2. ibid., p.xxiv.
3. The London Review of English and Foreign Literature, I.p.470
4. ibid, I. p.525ff, 1148ff, 89ff, 173ff, 177ff, 252, 34ff, 343ff, 431ff, 509ff.
5. ibid II, p.173ff.
6. ibid, II, 341.

realistic to relish entanglement in the maze of "metaphysical Disquisitions", one who prefers "to move on plain ground", certainly not a "too ardent and inquisitive speculist".[1.] He is a man of sentiment, capable of appreciating that admirable quality in others, even where reason suffers at its hands. So he blesses Soame Jenyn's "View of the Internal Evidence of the Christian Religion", "I thought it rather the effusion of a warm and well-intended heart, than the cool disquisition of a temperate and well-instructed mind. The rapturous language of a man deeply smitten by the bright charm of living beauty and perfection, was marked on every page".[2.] Other correspondents found Berington's smugness, his "vanity and presumption" extremely provoking:[3.] but the letters reveal more than conceit: the correspondence columns of the 'London Review' represent Berington's first entry into the harvest fields of English Liberality. The beginning was a tentative one, and the letters are initialed, not signed: already, however, the self-conscious air of impartial rationalism which was to become so characteristic of his writing is in evidence.

In August 1776 Berington published ten open "Letters on Materialism" addressed to Priestley.[4] There was nothing original, nor indeed coherent, about the book. The arguments

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1. ibid., II, 509-511.
2. ibid., IV, p.151.
3. ibid., II, 252, 431-2.
4. (Joseph Berington) Letters on Materialism and Hartley's Theory of the Human Mind, addressed to Dr. Priestley. (London 1776).

against materialism varied from the pragmatic - that the doctrine even if true ought not to be taught because of its bad moral consequences, [1.] - to the stale Cartesian - that if a single particle of matter cannot think, then no possible combination of particles can do so either. [2.] Altogether more interesting were the evidences of Berington's "Liberality" scattered up and down the book. The very dedication, fulsomely complimentary to Priestley, made it clear that Berington intended his work as "internal criticism" from within the charmed circle of enlightenment. More significantly he was able to concur with Priestley in rejecting traditional anti-materialist doctrines - that of the passivity of matter, for example: [3.] he expounded a doctrine of man basically the same as that in the Douay Theses, [4.] and although he explicitly condemned the deterministic trend of Bonnet's writings, [5.] there are evident signs of a heavy dependence on them. So he argued that the soul, though immaterial, has certain qualities in common with highly refined matter which make interaction possible! [6.] He employed again the familiar

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1. ibid. pp.6, 16.

2. ibid. pp.47ff, 61. cf. Leslie Stephen, op.cit.I.v.sect.5.

3. ibid. p.32.

4. above, Ch.II, Appendix A.

5. Letters on Materialism, pp.12-3.

6. Ibid. pp.73-4, 197. He teeters inconsistently between a quasi-materialist doctrine of the physical interaction of body and soul (p.197) and a "preestablished harmony" whereby nerve impulses, the channels of sensation, are "answered by sensations and ideas in the soul, totally distinct from the cause, which appears to produce them".(p.72).

illustration of the oyster whose limited reasoning powers were the result, not of the absence of soul, but of a primitive physical structure. [1] Throughout the book there were hints of liberal attitudes which extended beyond the controversy itself, confirming the impression given by the London Review letters, of a man anxious to appear knowing and enlightened. Bonnet was "an ingenious and learned author, so well known in the literary world for his various and eloquent productions in the Philosophical walk" - a world to which, by implication, the writer himself belonged.[2] Berington subscribed to Priestley's favourite doctrine of the inevitability of progress given "free and candid discussion" [3] and to the "true and only true reformation principles" of rational belief and religious freedom. [4] Priestley's anti-catholic comments were censured not merely as false, but as inappropriate in a work "addressed to philosophers", giving readers " a very poor opinion of your ingenuousness and liberal turn of mind". [5]

Berington's book was variously received. The London Review published a long and scurrilous attack by an anonymous correspondent and endorsed his judgements in their own review of the work.[6]

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1. ibid, pp.201-2. cf. Appendix A. Anima Brutorum.
2. ibid, p.10.
3. ibid, p.216.
4. ibid, p.8
5. ibid, p.227
6. London Review, V. pp.52f, pp.122-125.

On the other hand another 'liberal' journal, the Monthly Review, was more favourable. "The Letters now before us are written with the best intention: they have very considerable merit: and will serve ... as an antidote against the prevelance of a theory, which degrades man to a mere machine, and which, if persued, must terminate in absolute Spinozism!! " [1.] Priestley himself, naturally enough, took a less favourable view, and expressed it trenchantly in a published reply to Berington's book. "In my opinion, hardly any of the works of the three Scotch writers, which you and I hold so cheap, is weaker in point of argument than yours. I barely except that of Dr. Oswald, who is certainly one of the most dogmatical and absurd of all writers". [2.] Priestley's strongest point against Berington was his inconsistency in maintaining any dichotomy between soul and body, while he admitted so much of the materialist system. Berington admitted, following Bonnet, that soul interacted physically with body and "is not ... deprived of such inferior qualities, as are not unalliable with the more exalted species". [3.] This, says Priestley was to admit all that is necessary for a materialist case. [4.] All the same, the liberal tone of the 'Letters' was not lost on Priestley "so that I do not absolutely despair of engaging you to acknowledge that you have fallen into several very important mistakes". [5.] Indeed, Priestley

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1. Monthly Review 56, p.81f.
2. Letter to the Author of the Letters on Materialism .. (first pub. 1777) in Priestley, Works, IV p.122f.
3. Letters on Materialism, pp.76,73.
4. Priestley, Works IV, pp.124-5.
5. ibid, pp.234-5.

found it necessary to repudiate Berington's accusation of his bigotry. He guessed that Berington was a Catholic, and pointed out that "though you treat me as a bigot, I do not, like those of your persuasion, confine the favour of God, here or hereafter, to my own sect, or even to the class of Christians", and assures him that "I am even not without friends among zealous Catholics, little as you seem to suspect it". [1.]

Berington's 'liberality' emerged from anonymity in 1779 with the publication of "Immaterialism Delineated", his final contribution to the controversy. [2.] The book was a rather bizarre rag-bag of the theories of matter and soul in circulation among the Catholic metaphysicians of Europe. Boscovich, Signorgna, Needham were all heavily drawn upon; [3.] and Bonnet, despite the solemn disavowal of his errors in the "Letters", [4.] was reinstated as "that valuable and virtuous citizen of Geneva, to whose writings I primarily owe whatever in my philosophy is either good or fair". [5] The argument of the book - such as it is - need not concern us. It is little more than an expansion of the ideas in the Theses and the "Letters". Reviewers waxed witty upon the book's derivativeness; a waggish writer for the "London" descended to a pun on Berington's name: "The performance before us is a mind of miscellaneous collection of philosophical scraps taken from various authors"- a veritable "Joseph's coat of many colours". [6.] The

1. ibid., pp.234-5.
2. Immaterialism Delineated: or, a View of the First Principles of Things. (London 1779)
3. ibid., pp.99-100, 102, 224, etc.
4. above, p. note.
5. Immaterialism, p.264.
6. London Review, IX, p.34 ff.

argument was thought eccentric rather than bad; the same reviewer made merry at Berington's "vaulting upon the high-rope of metaphysics", while the "Monthly" smirked at "our metaphysical Catholic". [1.] Even Priestley, who gave and expected no quarter in controversy, contented himself with declaring his non-comprehension of Berington's "peculiar system of immaterialism". [2.]

The most interesting section of the book was the preface, for here Berington declared himself a Papist, and asserted, what Blackburne and his associates denied, the compatibility of that persuasion with Enlightenment. "Though myself a member of a church, which ... is represented as intolerant and stubbornly averse from freedom of enquiry, I will say, that however true such representation might be, with regard to former times or the sentiments of some individuals even at this day, still that it is, by no means, any point of doctrinal belief. The mind of a Roman Catholic may be as open to rational enquiry, and he is as free to speculate on every subject placed within the reach of human investigation, as any member of the reformed churches: for his submission must be rational ..." [3.] Berington further identified himself with the Priestley milieu by denouncing the bigotry of Established churches - ".. churches of every denomination, to which ... circumstances ... have given power and jurisdiction, will ever, as such, be more or less intollerant, and enemies to free inquiry". [4.] But whatever the "human obstacles, the

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1. Monthly Review, 61, p.33f.
2. Priestley, Disquisitions, I. p.xxxii.
3. Immaterialism, p. v-vi.
4. ibid., loc.cit.

prejudices, the passions and the low views of men" truth must inevitably "make its way"; it had "nothing to fear from the most minute or rigid investigation". [1.] These were the commonplaces of 'liberal' thought, and were new only in issuing from a self-declared Roman Catholic. Protestant readers found the conjunction odd. The "Monthly" reviewer thought it extraordinary that Berington should not only profess himself a Catholic but "seemingly exult" in his religion, protesting liberality, yet accepting with "unhesitating assent" the mysterious doctrines "which .. his church holds out to him: 'a widely extended body of men' - (who think for the rest)". Berington had expressed an inclination to publish a philosophical defence of Catholicism: the reviewer commented, "It would indeed be a curiosity". [2.]

With the completion of 'Immaterialism Delineated' Berington resolved to "Burn (his) metaphysical pen" [3.] and turn from controversy. The same year in which he had laboured at his 'metaphysic book' saw the passing of the First Catholic Relief Act; that Act and its aftermath were to demand his undivided attention for the next three years.

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1. ibid., p.viii

2. Monthly Review 61 p.34. One characteristic feature of the book is Berington's treatment of Aquinas. Surprisingly enough, he thinks highly of him; the Angelic Doctor might almost, he says, be a modern philosopher, for passages in his writings suggest "an accurate version of the Essay on Human Understanding or ... a philosopher of the 18th century". Occasionally he "inadvertently (takes) a wrong view.." - on these occasions he is ably set right by Mr. Harris in his Philosophical Arrangements !! (Immaterialism pp.393-405).

3. Immaterialism, p.xvii. For a summary of the whole controversy, highly and scurrilously one-sided in Priestley's favour, see S. Badcock A Slight Sketch of the Controversy between Dr. Priestley and his opponents ... on Matter and Spirit. (London n.d. - 1780) Berington's books are attacked, pp.18-20.

II.

It is unnecessary here to outline the course of the 1778 Act. Begun on Government initiative, it was a conciliatory gesture intended to secure Catholic loyalty during time of war.[1.] The clergy early on were excluded from any part in the negotiations by the Catholic gentry, who displayed throughout the negotiations a pronounced anti-clericalism.[2.] Such an attitude was common enough among Catholic gentry, but in fact the committee of laymen who organised the negotiations was decidedly 'liberal' in tone.[3.] It included Mr. Stapleton of Carlton in Yorkshire, where Berington had been living for more than a year,[4.] and Berington must have been well informed of the proceedings. The Act was to provide the occasion for the first emergence of what was later to be dubbed 'Cisalpine' opinion as a force within the English Catholic Church. It was also to have more sinister consequences. The Relief provisions, though modest in their scope, awoke Protestant alarm, and were the immediate cause of the No-Popery riots of 1780. But opposition was not confined to riots; James Fordyce, a fashionable Presbyterian preacher living in London, republished a twenty-five year old sermon warning the nation against the Delusive and Persecuting Spirit of Popery.[5.]

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1. For a full account, E. Burton, Challenor (ii), pp.181ff.

2. ibid., pp.190, 195, 202, 213-4. Page , notes

3. ibid., p.190

4. Apparently as companion rather than chaplain, as he had no faculties for the Northern District till 1780 - BAA. C. 817. M. Gibson to T. Talbot, 30.i.1781.

5. James Fordyce DD (1720-96) A sermon .. on the Delusive and Persecuting Spirit of Popery (London 1779). Fordyce was minister at the Monkwell St. Presbyterian Chapel in London, a preacher noted for his fine style, and a friend of Dr. Johnson's.

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Absurdly alarmist, painting gruesome pictures of Romish domination and persecution, and calling on Protestants to "resolve firmly, by the grace of God ... that whatever you may be compelled to part with beside, you will on no account part with your bible".[1] The sermon nevertheless contained a challenge which might have been aimed at Berington himself. Recognising that a few Catholics appeared to be more 'liberal' than their bigotted co-religionists, Fordyce asked, "If many of them have acquired new light, by the diffusion of learning and philosophy, what effects has it produced upon the face of their Church? Have they publicly reprobated a single error in the Established system, or dropped a single practice of their former superstition? Have they in a body expressed one sentiment of toleration?"[2]

Caiaphas-like, he prophesied unawares, and his challenge neatly formulated the later strategy of Cisalpine supporters of Emancipation, with their condemnation of Continental Catholicism, and their advocacy of universal toleration. The immediate outcome, however, was a reply from Berington's aggrieved pen. Fordyce's charges were substantially those of Blackburne in the '<u>Confessional</u>'; they provided Berington with the opportunity of a public disclaimer. The pamphlet, therefore, struck a new note in Catholic apologetic. Throughout, Berington adopted the tone, not of a divine defending doctrines, but of a liberal and a gentleman remonstrating with a bigotted opponent. "I will meet you as a man of sense and information, as a man who has read the human mind, and contemplated the rise, progress and general influence of our passions ..." in short

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1. <u>ibid</u>., p.35.
2. <u>ibid</u>., p.31.

"as a Christian, a Philosopher, and a Citizen". [1.] To Fordyce's attacks he could only respond in shocked disbelief that any man could be so violent, so unfair "Fie, Dr.Fordyce", [2.] There was more to the pamphlet than this, though, for scattered among the more general appeals for reasonableness, charity and "universal toleration" were statements which might have indicated to Papist and Protestant alike that something new was afoot in English Catholicism. Endorsing traditional "Old Catholic" dislike of "the abuses of ignorance, and the hyperbolical expressions of wanton piety", Berington expressed a desire to see modes of worship modified to the peculiar character of each nation. He formally disowned "the extravagances of a courtly Bellarmine, studious of extending Papal jurisdiction; (and) the follies of an Escobar, fabricating, in idle fancy, loose codes of morality". [3.] The sentiments were not unknown among 'Old Catholics', but their expression in polemic was a new departure. In any case, for a Roman Priest to proclaim publicly the "first and leading principle" of the Reformation, "universal toleration", to be also the "true spirit of Christianity" was in itself a revolution. And in the same cause Berington came forward to denounce not merely the Established Church (which Catholics had done often enough before), but the principle of establishment itself. The hint given in "Immaterialism" [4.] is expanded into a downright condemnation.

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1. Berington, A letter to Dr.Fordyce on Answer to his Sermon on the Delusive and Persecuting Spirit of Popery(London 1779), pp.2,5.

2. ibid., pp.8,34.

3. ibid., pp.22,29,66.

4. Page 114, note 4, above.

Throughout Christian history, he urged, the union of Church and State had "greatly injured the real interest and object of religion ..."; established churches were always intolerant.[1.]

Fordyce's pamphlet was one of many; Wesley himself wrote in defence of Gordon's Protestant Association, denouncing "the progress of that soul-deceiving and all-enclosing superstition which threatens to overspread this land".[2.] Against him, too, Berington took up the cudgels, in a brief and unproductive private correspondence. Wesley had asserted that no non-Catholic government could rely on Catholic allegiance, for their church taught that faith need not be kept with heretics. Berington assured him of the falsehood of this charge, and invited him to discuss the matter face to face. Wesley was unmoved: "I am persuaded, you have "told me what <u>you</u> believe", and perhaps many of your acquaintance. But I know, this is not the universal, no, nor the <u>General</u> belief of Roman Catholics, either in England, Scotland, Ireland or any other part of Europe or America where I have been ... I must ... decline a personal conference, because I have not the least hope of its doing any good".[3] Berington encountered in Wesley, as in Blackburne and Fordyce, the blank refusal to concede the compatability of 'liberality' and sincere

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1. <u>ibid</u>., pp.43-4.

2. J. Wesley <u>A Letter concerning the Civil Principles of Roman Catholics and a Defence of the Protestant Association</u>, in <u>Miscellaneous Tracts by the Revd. Arthur O'Leary</u>. (3rd Ed. London 1782), p.201.

3. <u>Throck. Mss.</u> J. Wesley to Berington, Feb.11th, 1780.
Same to same, Feb.24th, 1780.

Catholicism. What was needed then, was a manifesto, a public avowel of Catholic enlightenment, a rejection of the paper tiger which protestant writers had created. Arthur O'Leary, the Irish 'Patriot Priest' published in 1780, an "Essay on Toleration" which went some of the way towards achieving just this. O'Leary declared his aim to be the restoration to man of 'the indelible charter of his temporal rights, which no earthly power has ever been commissioned by Heaven to deprive him of, on account of his mental errors". [1] The essay abounded in 'liberal' touches. Calvin and Bellarmine were lumped together as 'apologists of persecution' and O'Leary made a sidesweep at Scholasticism; "Cartesius, in a stove, by remarking the motion of the smoak (sic) that rolled from his pipe, gave the first shock to Aristotle's barbarous philosophy, that kept the world in ignorance for so many ages ..." [2] He denounced the Inquisition "that has put Jesus on a level with Moloch" and throughout presented himself as a 'philosophical divine'. [3] But the essay lacked particularity, and might as easily have been written by a Protestant. At the end of 1780 Berington published a more explicit work, the "State and Behaviour of English Catholics". [4]

The book comprised two parts, an historical account of the Roman Catholics from the time of the Reformation, and a description of their contemporary "number, wealth and character". Its

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1. A. O'Leary, An Essay on Toleration in Miscellaneous Tracts, p.311.

2. O'Leary, op.cit., pp.336, 321.

3. ibid., pp.321-2, 352, 382.

4. J. Berington The State and Behaviour of the English Catholics from the Reformation to the year 1780, with a view of their present number, wealth, and character, etc. (London 1780)

purpose was to demonstrate that "neither Church nor State has anything to fear from English Catholics". Berington's review of the history of the recusants portrayed them as loyal and calumniated men, who had never deserved persecution: his survey of their present state claimed that not only were they more loyal than ever, but that numerically and politically they had dwindled to insignificance, and were not to be feared. Alarmist pictures of "galloping popery", were mere chimeras. "Men violently prejudiced, like some insects, see with polyhedron optics .. their eyes multiply". [1.] The book was full of "Whiggish Papistry", and Berington's attitude towards the golden days of the Catholicizing Stuarts was more adapted to the taste of Whig Protestants than to the nostalgia of the old men who ruled the English Mission. James II was lashed for the folly and bigotry which had brought his saner co-religionists to a common ruin. The revolution of 1688, announced Berington, was the dawn of liberty in England, and the British Constitution its glory. [2.] But political heterodoxy was not the sum of Berington's offence. The preface of the book formed a manifesto of "Liberal" attitudes. In in Berington presented himself as a staunch Briton, despising subterfuge and seeking the clear light of public scrutiny for his equally British religion. "Why is innocence

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1. ibid., p.iii

2. ibid., pp.57, 73, 133. And see the 2nd ed. (1781) p.197, where Berington urges Catholic parents to teach their children the "love of freedom" and urges that they should "often run over the annals of that weak king, from whose bigotted and rash designs, our misfortunes are principally derived. Paint in glowing warmth the civil blessings of the Revolution; and inculcate sentiments of unshaken loyalty to the royal house of Hanover".

to retire from inspection?" The Britishness of his creed was attested by his disclaimer of traditional terms like "Roman Catholic". "The word Roman has been given us to intimate some undue attachment to the See of Rome ... I am no Papist, nor is my religion Popery". These were only to be found "in the kingdoms of Italy, Spain and Portugal"; the British Catholics were not to be judged by their foreign brethren, " a motley crew", superstitious and full of bad principles; foreign colleges like Douay were better replaced by English establishments, far from foreign influence, less likely to breed that dogged mistrust of English society which is the bane of English priests. [1.]

Having in the first section of the book adopted a Whig view of monarchy, bound by the constitution, Berington moved on the develop a similar picture of Papal authority in the Church. "His office is in no sense absolute"; each bishop and pastor is possessed of "a proper and essential jurisdiction", wholly uncontrollable by, and independent of, the See of Rome. The Pope was "the first magistrate in a well regulated state". There was little in this which went beyond traditional 'Old Catholic' attitudes to the papacy, though his terminology suggested a "democratic" interpretation of the Church's structure which was to be developed by later 'Cisalpine' writers, including himself. He clearly did pass beyond 'Old Catholic' bounds in the hostility of the majority of his remarks on the Papacy, whose "arrogant ambition" had 'usurped the rights of

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1. ibid (1780) pp. v, vi, ix, 112, 137, 173.

nations'. Besides, he claimed, the Popes were tight fisted. "It is not usual with the See of Rome to bestow her earthly commodities: she receives but does not give". [1.]

The drift of all this is clear enough: English Catholics had been accused of slavish obedience to an all-powerful Pope. Berington was doing his best to shatter this picture. The same tactics, of adopting some of the attitudes of Protestant controversalists in order to contest their main point, are evident elsewhere in the book. In an early controversial work Blackburne had descanted on the ignorance and boorishness of the English Catholic clergy, their narrow education, their consequent bigotry, their fear of heresy and heretics. [2.] Berington's own portrait of his <u>confrères</u> is startingly similar, and as he was familiar with Blackburne's writings, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that he had this description in mind as he wrote. [3.] "Our priests" he wrote " are upright and sincere: but narrowed by a bad education". They were full of prejudices; their minds cluttered with "the lumber of the schools", and they were seldom seen in society of Protestants "a man truly orthodox flies heretical company". But in Berington's hands all this became an argument for fuller toleration - the building of schools and seminaries in England would soon acclimatize and civilize such men, to the benefit of society. [4.] Harshly as the secular clergy

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1. <u>ibid</u>., pp.17, 119, 152-4.

2. Blackburne, <u>Erasmus's Preface</u> in <u>Works</u> I, pp.30-34.

3. He refers to Blackburne's works, <u>State</u>, pp.111, 157-8, and was involved in a correspondence with Blackburne about the accuracy of the latter's "Charges" for 1765-6 (with reference to Catholic numbers). Blackburne's <u>Works</u> I, pp.lvii-lix. pp.1-259.

4. <u>State</u>, pp.156-166, 174.

were treated, the Religious Orders fared no better, being dismissed as useless parasites, whose end was, in the enlightened 18th century, all but nigh: "it begins to be a prevailing notion, that the earthly substance of families can be extended to better purpose, than in maintaining men, who have no return to make to their benefactors, but a promise of a place in paradise, which, it is now discovered, they cannot dispose of". [1.]

Asperities of this sort were seen by Berington as part of a necessary detachment, and his case could hardly have been made out in any other way, given the audience he hoped to reach: the Catholic authorities, nevertheless, received the book with indignation. "I never saw from the pen of any writer, Christian or Pagan, more self-sufficiency, Inconsistencies, etc, etc, in the same compass", stormed the Vicar Apostolic of the North. Goaded by the 'State' he read the 'Letters on Materialism', and found Berington's writings consistently "replete with contradictions and assertions not easily to be reconciled with theological Principles". [2.] Bishop Gibson, indeed, considered refusing him missionary faculties, and thought him one from whom "all ranks of men may call for reparation ... particularly Churchmen". [3.] Bishop Challoner thought the book "nonsense and conceited" and ordered it out of his sight, while the President of Douay put it

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1. ibid., 166-8, 176-8.
2. BAA C.817. Bp. M. Gibson to Bp. T. Talbot, Jan. 30th, 1781.
3. BAA C.827. Same to same, July 5th, 1782.

safely under lock and key in "Hell" where it could do no harm.[1.] But whatever the response of the Catholic "establishment", a new light had been cast on English Popery. The future Archbishop of Baltimore, John Carroll, wrote from America to congratulate Berington on the "noble and generous freedom" with which he had exposed the follies and shortcomings of friend and foe, of Catholic oppressed and Protestant oppressor, a freedom he had long awaited in some "Philosophical Divine". He even urged Berington to publish something further on Papal jurisdiction and the use of the vernacular in the liturgy![2.] Among Protestants, too, the book attracted notice. Cole the antiqury compared notes with Michael Lort, chaplain to Archbishop Cornwallis, finding 'The State' "well written and sensible": according to Cole, "a more rational, Truth-telling Book never was published", though, staunch high churchman that he was, he thought the references to disestablishment "visionary to the highest degree".[3.] The Critical Review welcomed the apparent change of heart among English Catholics. "In this enlightened age", it commented, "popery assumes a new form; and sensible people are no longer alarmed at the phantoms of superstition". Nor did the reviewer miss

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1. AAW 47/54. Bp. W. Gibson to Bp. J. Douglass, May 8th, 1797. For an ordinary missioner's (offended) response, Beverley Burton Constable Papers, DDEC 60/20 A. Revd Alexander Strachan to William Maxwell Constable, Feb. 17th, 1781.

2. John Carroll to Joseph Berington, draft, n.d. Baltimore Cathedral Archives.

3. J. Nichols, Literary Anecdotes of the 18th Century (London 1812-5). I. p.671. William Cole to Michael Lort, July 2nd, 1781. Mss. notes in Cole's copy of the State, in the Routh Collection, Durham University Library.

the point of Berington's gloomy picture of the decay of Catholicism. The abilities of Catholics, he declared, were so moderate that "they can never endanger the constitution of England". [1.] Priestley himself noticed Berington's book, in the second edition of his "Disquisitions" as "seasonable and excellent": they had by now become personally aquainted, [2.] and Priestley took the opportunity of expressing his "sincere esteem for Mr. Berington, as a man of truly liberal turn of mind, and cultivated understanding, though warped, as I must think him to be, by his education. I wish all Catholics were such as he is ..." [3.]

A second edition appeared in 1781; in the same year Berington set off on the Grand Tour with his friend Miles Stapleton. [4.] There were other liberal champions ready to carry on his work. Lord Petre, the leader of the Catholic gentry, published an anonymous 'Address to the President of the Protestant Association", in which he claimed to know "many Protestants, who have cheerfully surrendered very inveterate prejudices "as a result of Berington's book. [5.] He adopted the general tone of the 'State and Behaviour', urging "unbounded liberty" of thought, and, echoing Berington's claim that only a "thin partition" separated the Established and the Roman church, expressed a readiness

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1. Critical Review (Old Series) 51 (1781) pp.51,55. The Monthly Review thought it a liberal a well-written pamphlet ... a reliable and animated text." v.64 p.401.

2. Catholic Miscellany IX p.224. They met at Wolverhampton in 1776 while Berington was missioner there: Priestley was at this time at Calne, but often visited his brother-in-law who lived near Birmingham. (DNB)

3. Priestley, Disquisitions, I. p.xxxii.

4. Catholic Miscellany, IX, p.297

5. (Robert, Lord Petre) An Address to the President of the Protestant Association" (London 1782), p.20

on the part of English Catholics "could certain obstacles be removed" to unite with the national church "in the strictest bonds of Christian amity". [1] This was moderately daring (and quite untrue). But Petre had in his employ a priest who was every bit as 'liberal' as Berington, and considerably less restrained. In 1780 Alexander Geddes came to London, to pursue a literary career. He became acquainted with Lord Petre, who eventually financed Geddes' pet project, a new and accurate version of the Bible to replace the Rheims-Douay translation. Geddes, like Berington, was a product of that late and lukewarm enlightenment which seems to have filtered through British Catholicism after 1750, and his biblical work was the most important, and most radical, of its kind undertaken in the period by any British scholar. [2] In 1780 he composed what may be considered a companion piece to Berington's "State and Behaviour". Geddes' work, which was not published till 1800, was addressed to "all moderate Protestants, particularly to the members of both houses of Parliament". Its purpose was to minimise the "alien" elements of Catholicism, alien, that is, to English Protestant prejudice; and to a greater degree even than Berington, Geddes jettisoned the "non-essentials" of his religion, attacking clerical celibacy, the religious orders, and all the trappings of Catholic devotion. "Beads, Rosaries, Medals, Agnus Deis and Scapulars" were all dismissed as "Pious playthings for old women and children". [3] Papal, and indeed

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1. ibid., p.59.

2. See J. M. Good Life of Alexander Geddes (London 1803) and R. C. Fuller's (unpublished) Cambridge Ph.D.Thesis, "Alexander Geddes, Biblical Critic".

3. Alexander Geddes, A Modest Apology for the Roman Catholics of Great Britain, (London 1800) pp.ii, 58, 193, 211, 222.

Conciliar, infallibility, he rejected out of hand, and the Papal Primacy became "when stript (sic) of all its usurped appendages, and reduced to its primitive simplicity" nothing more than "a bare primacy of honour, rank and precedence, which is not more dangerous to the liberties of the Christian Church in general, than the primacy of Lyons is to the liberties of the Gallican, or that of Canterbury is to the liberties of the Anglican Church". [1.] The combined efforts of his Catholic friends and the Gordon Riots disuaded him from publishing the work, but it remained as a probable silent influence on his associates and admirers. Meanwhile, he pursued the 'Cisalpine' quest for 'Liberality' with gusto, and in the approved Beringtonian manner. In a reply to a "No Popery" pamphlet of 1783 he exulted in the dissipation of the "cloud of superstition, which gathered during the ages of ignorance, and which had so long hung over the Christian world". The Catholic as well as the Protestant 'hemisphere' grew every day "brighter and brighter" under "the sunshine of a sober philosophy". [2.] He expressed the English Catholic detestation of all "papal usurpation", and portrayed in glowing colours the growing purity even of Italian Catholicism, of worthy clergy labouring "to eradicate old prejudices, to explode false miracles

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1. ibid., p.80

2. (A. Geddes) "Cursory Remarks on a late Fanatical Publication Entitled A Full Detection of Popery, &c., submitted to the Candid Perusal of the Liberal minded of every Denomination". (London 1783) p.27.

to expunge fabulous legends, to correct all popular abuses, and to excite their respective flocks ... to live soberly, justly and piously", even finding space to commend "an intelligent pontiff" for his encouragement of bible study. [1.] But Rome was not built in a day, nor could the Roman ogre which haunted the Protestant mind be so easily exorcised. In 1784 a series of events in America raised once more the question of the "liberality" of Catholics. Charles Henry Wharton, an American priest who had till 1783 ministered to the Catholic congregation at Worcester, returned to his native land, and in the course of his journey became a member of the Anglican Church. To justify his action he published a "Letter" to his late congregation. This well-mannered and elegant essay in polemic rehearsed a number of standard objections to Catholic doctrine, but included a section of personal apologetic. [2.] Wharton's first doubts had arisen from friendships with Protestants in Worcester, for he was unable to believe that these good and godly men were doomed to perdition, as Catholics maintained. Yet having relinquished the doctrine of exclusive salvation he was forced to question his whole creed, for he had abandoned implicit faith in the infallibility of the Church which taught this "master-error". Wharton argued that a consistent Roman Catholic could not be "liberal", for he must submit his mind to the "gorgeous prerogative" of infallibility, the key-stone of the

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1. ibid., p.42, 52. Good, op.cit., p.81.

2. Charles Henry Wharton, A Letter to the Roman Catholics of the City of Worcester from the late Chaplain of that Society. (London 1784).

Roman system. Even English Catholics, who "must affect to be liberal if (they) mean to be read", were bound by their church's intollerance, though some had attempted to palliate it, and others had rejected it outright. The former, according to Wharton, were sophists, the latter inconsistent. Berington was mentioned by name. [1.]

The letter was answered in America by John Carroll, [2.] in England by William Pilling. Pilling was a forceful character, and his reply was something less than restrained. He made no bones about his conviction that salvation was not to be found outside the Church of Rome.[3.] Here, for a Protestant public, was direct confirmation of the worst of Wharton's accusations. It seemed that all Berington's work was undone. The Monthly Review, at least, thought that Popery had shown its cloven hoof. Apologists like Berington "though right good Catholics at heart" had "preserved the forms of moderation with such liberal address and carried so much good nature in their countenance when

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1. ibid., pp.8, 10, 11.

2. John Carroll, Address to the Roman Catholics of the United States (Annapolis 1784). Carroll was a member of the suppressed Society of Jesus. He was appointed Prefect Apostolic of the American Church in 1784, but not consecrated Bishop till 1790, at Lulworth, by Bp. Walmesley. Despite his friendship with Charles Plowden, one of Berington's bitterest opponents, Carroll thought highly of Berington's writings. He was strongly Gallican, a trait perhaps deepened by his resentment of the suppression of the Jesuits. See Arthur O'Leary's Review of the important controversy between Dr.Carroll and the Revd. Messrs Wharton and Hawkins (London 1786) p.62.

3. William Pilling O.F.M. A CAVEAT addressed to the Catholics of Worcester against the insinuating letter of Mr. Wharton. (London 1785) Cf. Ch. II, above, p 84

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apologising for the most ill-natured religion in the world, that simple readers lost sight of their cause and forgot their profession". Pilling, on the other hand, "disdains to mix anything of the Protestant with the Papist ... He neither disguises his principles, nor softens his zeal. He flames with all the ardour of a Domonic, while the shades of Bellarmine and Baronius, Stapleton and Cressy surround him, and the locusts of the bottomless pit thicken over his head". And Pilling's infamy was taken as the measure of that of his fellows. Secure in a tolerant, because Protestant, country, "the Popish emissaries boldly step forward in the face of day with the ensign of Rome waving in their hands: and all its harsh and unmellowed colours repelling the meek eye of Christian charity, and putting modest faith to the blush". [1.]

This was bad enough; matters worsened with the appearance of a counter-attack on Pilling by another apostate priest, John Hawkins. Hawkins had been a close friend of Berington's, moving in the same "liberal" Catholic circles, till his liberalism took him into the arms of a wife, and the bosom of the Church of England. [2.] This attack Berington could scarcely ignore, coming as it did from a former associate, and in 1785 he published "Reflections addressed to the Revd. John Hawkins". [3.] This was a walk around the controversy rather than a systematic contribution to it, his main aim being to refute the charge of Catholic bigotry.

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1. Monthly Review, 73 (July-December 1785), pp.476, 477.

2. John Hawkins An Appeal to Scripture, Reason and Tradition .. with some strictures on a caveat ... by W. Pilling (Worcester n.d. - 1785) Hawkins, an ex-Benedictine, had also published an attack on celibacy.

3. J. Berington, Reflections addressed to the Revd. John Hawkins, (Birmingham 1785)

And so he began with a disclaimer of all polemic intent - "To controversial writing I am no friend: were it calculated to do good, the good had been done long ago". Reviewing the various publications in the controversy, he dismissed Wharton's Letter as elegant but insubstantial. Pilling's Caveat as inelegant and crabbed, too evidently the product of a foreign and scholastic education. To Carroll's work, however, he devoted more time, and here took the opportunity to display the "noble freedom" and liberality Carroll had praised. For Berington passed from a brief notice of Carroll's book to his appointment as first American bishop. Carroll, wrote Berington, knew well "how many abuses had crept into the vulgar practice, and how much the discipline of his church had departed from primitive simplicity". He sketched a plan of reform which he claimed was Carroll's own. While remaining in Catholic communion the American would "take to himself and his ministers that independence of the Roman See, which is their Christian right. The Bishop of Rome should be his primate in the sense he had anciently been received by the orthodox churches of Asia and Africa". Other reforms planned by Carroll, claimed Berington, included the introduction of the vernacular into the liturgy, and a drastic reduction of that "cumbrous weight of ceremonies and unmeaning pageantry which, the warmer imaginations of some nations, and the material conceptions of others, had introduced into European practice". In a word, "all that he would reform, which rational piety and a proper sense of the dignity of religion should point out to him as deserving of it". [1.]

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1. ibid., pp.19-21.

Berington's own pronouncements on the Papacy were hardly less startling. As in the "State and Behaviour" the Pope was called "the first ecclesiastical magistrate", but now the democratic undertones were more explicit. "The representative body are our prelates; the represented are the people; and at the head of this constitution is the pope, in whose hands resides the principal executive power". Berington's Papacy was strictly limited: "He has indeed his perogative; but we have our privileges, and are independant on him, excepting where it has pleased the community, for the sake of unity and good order, to surrender into his hands a limited superintendence". [1] The description, commented a critic, might have come from Blackstone's Commentaries. [2] Other prevocative items in the book included a condemnation of Latin in the liturgy and of the "abuses and follies" of foreign Catholics; praise for religious policies of Joseph II; and the expression of doubts about the wisdom of clerical celibacy. [3] Hawkins was reminded that British Catholics at least are innocent of "mawmets niched in churches; of altars hung round with eyes, legs and arms", and Berington recalled that they had often laughed together at these continental absurdities. He informed Hawkins that "many things .. in the Catholic belief weigh rather heavy on my mind, and I should be glad to have a freer field to range in". [4] The point of all this was simple,

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1. ibid., pp.68-70.
2. Charles Plowden, Remarks on the writings of Joseph Berington, addressed to the Catholic clergy of England (London 1792), p.41.
3. Berington, Reflections, pp.8, 72, 74, 82.
4. ibid., pp.74-5, 56-7.

and Berington underlined it - "You must allow me at least to be a rational Catholic. I am not the only one". [1.]

Berington had recently returned from several years travel in France and Germany. "Reflections" made it clear that he had studied the activities of the Emperor Joseph II. The view of Church and Pope presented in the book was completely in accord with that of the "State and Behaviour" five years earlier. Nevertheless, it was both more explicit and more extreme. The developed scheme of Reflections mirrored the reforms in progress in the Austrian Empire too closely to be coincidental, and Berington actually singled Joseph out for particular praise: "The Emperor, it is sometimes said, has himself no religion ... it would be well for mankind, if other princes had as little". [2.]

The Protestant public, in the person of the Bampton Lecturer, welcomed this demonstration of the effects of "Learning and Philosophy" on 'Romanists'. [3.] Catholic reactions to the book were mixed. A Chaplain at the Neopolitan Ambassador's chapel denounced it publicly as "glaring apostacy .. under the mask of a liberal reform ..", a monster "hutched into life within the very precinct of our sanctury ..", and described

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1. ibid., p.22.

2. ibid., p.82.

3. George Croft, D.D. Eight Sermons ... at the Bampton Lecture (Oxford 1786), pp.197-201.

Berington as an "obscure and insignificant witling!" James Taylor, a priest at Douay, thought the work verging on heresy, though perhaps just avoiding it.[1.] Christopher Stonor at Rome wrote that though he liked parts of the book, it contained "unguarded expressions", and Berington had written of the Papacy in "too loose a manner". Yet the easy-going attitude of "Old Catholicism" could find a place

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1. A Discourse on Religions Innovations Pronounced by the Rev. Mr. Kirwan at His Excellency the Neopolitan Ambassador's Chapel, March 20th, 1786 (London n.d. - 1786) Kirwan's sermon casts a fascinating side-light on the religious psychology of the period. Kirwan was an Irishman, educated at St. Omer's, and at Louvain, where he was Professor of Philosophy until 1778. In that year he became chaplain to the Neopolitan Ambassador in London, and joined the fashionable and liberal circle of London clergy, which included popular Cisalpine preachers like Alexander Geddes, James Archer, James Wheeler and Thomas Hussey. Kirwan himself rapidly gained celebrity as a charity preacher, and frequently attended Parliament and the Law Courts in order to improve his style. In 1785 he began to have religious doubts, and in 1787 became an Anglican. He settled in Ireland, where he rapidly gained preferment: he married twelve years later. Kirwan never preached a "Recantation Sermon", an unusual omission in those days, and consistently refused all polemic. The attack on "Reflections", preached in the midst of his own religious doubts, and adopting a "hard-line" approach to criticism of the Church, clearly reflects Kirwan's own growing insecurity, and his attempts to suppress it. He warns his congregation against the "glare and parade of liberality of sentiment" which dares to criticise the "faith of your Fathers". If there are any blemishes or "too great luxuriance" in Catholicism, it is not for ordinary Catholics, priest or people, to criticise. It is better to "venerate the errors of the Church" than to adopt the ".. presumptuous novelties laid down in a paltry pamphlet." The "faith of our fathers must be revered .. not only in substance, but in form .."; to do otherwise is to set one's face against "the submission of so many centuries, the cry of a consenting universe". From the "spirit of reform to downright incredulity" the transition is easy, and rapid. And Kirwan rejects out of hand Berington's suggestion that only a "thin wall" separates the Catholic Faith from that of the Anglican Church - the separation is an ".. immense and impenetrable barrier". For biographical details see preface to Sermons by the late Rev. Walter Black Kirwan, Dean of Killala. With a sketch of his life (2nd Ed. London 1816,) pp.v-x.; Archives of the English College, Rome: Revd. James Taylor to Revd. John Foothead, January 28/1786 (Venerable Arch. 50/15/(i).)

for such looseness. Another English priest in Rome wrote that "He (Berington) really seems not to admit any authority in the Pope, but what has been given him by common consent. But he ought to be his own interpreter and therefore since he asserts in his "State and Behaviour" that the Pope has always been by divine right head of the Church (not without jurisdiction, I presume) that alone ought to silence the uncharitable zealots his adversaries". [1.] The "uncharitable zealots" were, for the most part, to be found in the Northern district, where the strongest opposition to all things "Cis-alpine" was later to develop. A group of priests in the North even set about extracting propositions from "Reflections", with the object of having them condemned. Word of their venture reached Oscott, and Berington accordingly wrote to the Vicar General of the district, John Chadwick. Chadwick had expressed an admiration for "Reflections"; Berington therefore adopted the tone of one liberal to another. Would Chadwick be so good as to inform "certain men", he asked, that he had never "written a line, which he intended them to read". He sought approval only from the proper judges of religious controversy, men such as Chadwick himself. More interestingly, he explained the motive of all his writings - the removal of Protestant prejudice - and attributed his apparent unorthodoxy to that motive. Since he wrote for Protestants "... My language ... must be principally adapted to them, and for this reason I often judge it proper to depart from terms, which the schools may seem to have consecrated". In proof of his good intentions, Berington admitted the looseness of the passage on the Papal prerogative and juris-

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1. BAA. C.905 Christopher Stoner to John Kir, April 14th/1787;
BAA. C.901 Revd.J.Foothead to John Kirk, March 17th/1787.

diction and observed that in any future edition it would be amended. [1]

Such an admission and promise would hardly appease a stickler for "sound forms of words", but the average "Old Catholic" priest would find honour and accuracy well-satisfied by such a transparently "sound" frame of mind, especially since Berington expressed his readiness to retract anything which "might be judged exceptionable" - an ironic undertaking, as later events were to prove. At any rate, he received, for the time being, a classic "Old Catholic" absolution. John Foothead, summing up the pro's and con's of Berington's case, gave perfect expression to the undoctrinaire ethos of the English Church. "How orthodox", he wrote, "in the main". [2].

Yet the book raised issues not so easily smoothed over. The "reforms" Berington had attributed to Carroll seemed to many Catholics a slur on that prelate's good name. " I have too good an opinion of Mr. Carroll's judgement and moderation to think him capable of such an innovation", wrote Stonor; and Charles Plowden, a lifelong correspondent of Carroll's, declared that "America is not more widely distant from England, than his (Carroll's) ideas of ecclesiastical government ... are from Mr. Berington's wild musings on the subject". [3] The point is of considerable importance, and Carroll's biographer,

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1. UPA. C.5. Berington to Revd. John Chadwick, July 29th/1786.

2. BAA. C.901. Foothead to Kirk, March 17th/1787. (My underlining).

3. BAA. C.905. Stonor to Kirk, April 14th/1787.
Charles Plowden, op.cit., p.29.

Peter Guilday, adduces some evidence of the truth of Plowden's statement. Of this evidence, the strongest single item is Carroll's own declaration that "Mr. Berington's brilliant imagination attributes to me projects which far exceed my powers, and in which I should find no co-operation from my clerical brethren, were I rash enough to attempt their introduction upon my own authority". On the other hand, Carroll's disclaimer is of interest, less for its positive content than for what it leaves unsaid. He nowhere disowns the reforms as undesirable, merely as impracticable; Guilday himself quotes a letter in which Carroll dismissed the use of Latin in the liturgy as "preposterous", attributing its retention to "chimerical fears of innovation"; he urged Berington to write on this subject, and on that of the Papal Power. [1.] Moreover, Carroll wrote to Berington praising Reflections, his sole criticism of it being the looseness of the passage on the Papacy, which he nevertheless thought could be understood in an orthodox sense. More significantly, he declared Berington's account of the proposed reforms "too flattering", and expressed his astonishment that the English bishops had not taken steps to gain ordinary status and to demand that they should no longer be appointed by a "foreign" jurisdiction. [2.] This is all the more striking since, in forwarding a copy of "Reflections", Berington had urged Carroll to found a national church, and proceed to the reform of abuses unhindered, or "at least without those obstacles which the court of Rome ever has, and ever will throw in the way of a church miserably constituted as that of the

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1. Peter Guilday, The Life and Times of John Carroll (New York,1922) pp.129-133. Guilday's account of the Carroll/Berington correspondence is very unreliable. cf. my "Ecclesiastical Democracy DetectedI" Recusant History, 10, No.4,(Jan.1970) p.209, Note 52.
2. BAA. C.892. Carroll to Berington, Maryland, Sept.29th/1786. (Copy in Kirk's hand).

English Catholics". He advised Carroll to "shut (his) eyes on the 14 last centuries, and only consider what was the prerogative of the See of Rome during the Apostolic ages and the years immediately succeeding to them. All that is essential then existed; the rest is abuse and corruption". [1.]

That letter, written only a few months after the "Reflections", reveals the direction in which Berington's "Liberality" was carrying him, from an "Old Catholic" detatchment from Continental Catholicism and the Papacy, towards positive hostility. The Carroll correspondence suggests that for part of the way at least he did not travel a solitary road. However that may be, he did not long conceal his new-found vehemence. Early in 1787 Berington appeared once more before the reading public, this time in the role of a Medievalist - the author of a life of "Abeillard and Heloisa". [2.] The subject might seem a strange one for an apologist, but Berington's purpose was clear enough. In the preface he informed his readers that he wrote as "rather a new character in the republic of letters", to wit "a Roman Catholic writer, attached to his religion but unshackled in his thoughts, and free in his expressions". [3.] As his letter to Carroll suggests, Berington had abandoned any caution he may hitherto have exercised, and the book was, accordingly, a systematic attack on positions which Protestants, and indeed many Catholics, might have supposed to be the very essence of Popery. Monkish superstition, scholastic philosophy and, above all, the usurped and vain "superstructure of prerogative and

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1. Guilday, op.cit., p.132. The original is in Baltimore Cathedral Archives.
2. Berington, History of the Lives of Abeillard and Heloisa .. (Birmingham 1787)
3. ibid., p.xxx.

privilege" that was the Papacy, were in turn assailed, and contemptuously condemned. The revolutionary and heretic Arnold of Brescia was hailed as a man ahead of his time, if, regrettably, an extremist; Berington related with crushing scorn the effect of Arnold's democratic onslought on the corrupt contemporary papacy. "The Pope viewed with horror the reverse of fortune which threatened the tiara; to be shorn of his mighty power, and to become the mere shepherd of the Christian people, was a thought too afflicting: he fell sick, and died". [1.]

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1. ibid., pp.67, 304. A note of caution here. Abeillard abounds in abuse of the standard Enlightenment whipping-boys - scholasticism - 'a maze of sophistry", medieval ignorance, "superstitious veneration" of saints, enthusiasm "of all passions the most dangerous". But there is also a surprising historical detatchment and even sympathy, totally absent from historians such as Hume. The papacy is one of Berington's principal targets, yet he can write "The popes ... were often men of ambition ... but also, for the greater part ... conspicuous for their abilities and high moral virtues: they were the first men of the age. In such hands place unlimited power, and the consequences must prove favourable to the general interests of human-kind ... In the twelfth century, take from Rome the vast influence of the tiara, and the condition of Europe ... will appear to be greatly more deplorable than it was..." (pp.99-100) He criticizes modern historians for their treatment of Hildebrand, one of the age's standard symbols of bigotry and ecclesiastical power-lust - "They reflect not that he lived in the eleventh century, when the manners of the age, and the ideas of men, were so different from those of the present day. We generally measure the conduct of others at a very unfair standard". (p.34). The same historical awareness is evident in his later "History of Henry II" , and Richard Simpson pointed out that Berington's treatment of Becket is considerably more balanced than Lingard's. (Rambler, 3rd Series vol II pp. 531-557. "Milner and his times".)

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his religion by reference to Hawkins' timidity in exchanging one authoritarian church for another. If one must change, then one must change wholeheartedly - "Freed but once from the restraint of authority, creeds and tests of churches should never reach me more. I would adopt in this country a much more rational faith than you have done". [1] In Abeillard, he pursued this strand of thought. Abeillard emerged as a sort of 'proto-Cisalpine', a liberal man concerned to found his faith in reason, and hounded by fanatical logic-choppers (like St. Bernard of Clairvaux!), for his fearless readiness to use new terminology, to question accepted notions. "Less bigotted than his contemporaries, and less awed by authority, the mind of Abeillard took a wider range. "His chief offence, according to Berington, was his attempt to "make that apppear rational, the principal merit of which consisted, they thought, in its opposition to common sense, and in a darksome intricacy of mystery. For this endeavour he was condemned, inevitably, for "he that looks for heterdoxy will be sure to find it ... Never is the eye of criticism so penetrating, as when the zeal of overweening orthodoxy animates the enquiry". [2] Behind that dismissal of "overweening orthodoxy" lies the whole tradition of English Catholic laxness in doctrinal matters. In Berington it takes on a more radical appearance; it becomes the voice of a Catholic Latitudinarianism. Christ, wrote Berington, had expressed certain doctrines in deliberately ambiguous language, that men might have liberty to disagree. Yet the "preternatural zeal" of religious controversalists was normally expended on the most exquisite abstractions,

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1. Reflections, p.100

2. Abeillard, pp.132-5.

on those "essential attributes which the deity has pleased to conceal from us, in the dark abyss of his own infinitude". God would prefer that we should live as men, "in the improvement of our own natures, and left the things above us to that administration, the wisdom and benificence of which are best adapted to the important work". [1.] It is the familiar nosce teipsum of Enlightenment -

"Know then thyself, presume not God to scan;
The proper study of mankind is Man. "

The increasing vehemence of Berington's writings require some explanation. They reflect, not merely the solitary progress of a single mind, but the articulation of a growing liberal ethos. In 1785 Berington was appointed missioner at Oscott, near Birmingham, in the Middle District. The move provided him with a pleasant country house, a "cure" with few responsibilities, and ample leisure for study. [2.] It also brought him into close contact with Priestley. Priestley had been minister of the Birmingham Meeting House since 1780, a congregation which was, according to him, "the most liberal in England". [3.] Berington and he had become acquainted in 1776; the acquaintance now ripened into friendship, and Berington became a regular visitor at the Priestleys'. The friendship provided Berington with an entry into the world of the Lunar society.

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1. ibid., p.157.
2. Catholic Miscellany, IX, p.297. Reflections, p.v.
3. Priestley, Memoirs, I. p.98

The autobiography of Mary Ann Galton, whose father was a founder member of the "Lunatics" contains a fascinating picture of Berington at this time, a background against which his writings became the more intelligable.[1.] Religion, philosophy, science and literature were the constant topics of discussion among Priestley's friends; the prevailing tone was, inevitably, 'liberal'. The company ranged from Atheists like Dr. Darwin, through the degrees of Rational and Old Dissent, to Catholics.[2.] Mary Anne Galton, indeed, remembered the house and chapel at Oscott as an oasis of faith and devotion in a world of shifting convictions and near infidelity,[3.] but there is no doubt that Berington shared many of the 'liberal' preoccupations of his new-found friends. In 1788 he published an "Essay on Sunday Schools" urging the establishment of non-sectarian schools and the composition of a catechism of commonly agreed Christian doctrine - "When we have separated from each society its distinctive opinions, which are mostly speculative, will be left a great mass of Christian doctrine, and the whole system of moral duties. Of these we will form our new religious code".[4.] This code will contain "every

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1. The Life of Mary Anne Schimmelpenninck (nee Galton) Edited by C. C. Hankin (London 1858).

2. Holt, op.cit., p.143, for a dinner party at Priestley's which included Berington, Galton, Dr. Samuel Parr, a Baptist minister, and the minister of the Swedenborgian "New Jerusalem Church!!"

3. Hankin, op.cit., I. p.249, 281.

4. An Essay on the Depravity of the Nation, with a view to the promotion of Sunday Schools, &c, of which a more extended plan is proposed. (Birmingham 1788), pp.27-8.

fundamental maxim of truth and virtue, which the most zealous and enlightened teacher could have been ambitious to instill". [1.] Confessional differences could then, if desired, be added to these basic teachings at other times, and the whole project would bring about the disappearance of all religious aminosity.[2.] The "Essay" led to an invitation to preach the annual Sunday School sermon at Priestley's meeting house, an invitation which Berington declined on the grounds that it would scandalize his fellow Catholics and "I would not willingly shock the prejudices of others, unless, by that shock, I might reasonably hope to surmount them". [3.] Years later Miss Galton was to recall a chance remark of Berington's, that "he did not care a straw for all the saints in the calendar"; at the time it deflected her growing attraction to Catholicism and the "wise and happy poor" to whom he ministered.[4.] Among Berington's Catholic acquaintances the same "Liberal" spirit was evident. The lay gentlemen who had steered the 1778 Act had been strongly, even violently liberal and anti-clerical. Bishop Hay was forcibly excluded from one of their

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1. ibid., p.29

2. ibid., p.35.

3. Berington to Priestley, October 20th/1790. Printed in the preface to Priestley's Evidence of the Resurrection of Jesus Considered. (Birmingham 1791) p.xiv. Priestley complacently relates that at the meetings of Unitarians which voted to ask Berington to preach "one of the company very pleasantly and properly said that, as the devotional part of the service on that occasion would fall to me, he hoped that on that day I would omit praying for the downfall of antichrist, which I readily engaged to do!!"

4. Huddleston Papers, County Record Office, Cambridge. Kenelm Digby to Richard Huddleston, 31st May/1842. (Account of a visit to Mr. Schimelpenninck).

meetings, and Sir Robert Throckmorton's "we don't want bishops" indicated more than a temporary irritation. [1.] William Gibson overheard a member of the negotiating Committee in 1778 declare that the gentry hoped to impose"restraints" on the clergy by means of the Act. [2.] The attitude was part and parcel of a cast of mind expressed with vehemence and point by James Booth, a noted Catholic lawyer, in 1763 "... it is too well known, that English P-p-sts will keep certain maxims and practices on foot, that all the world has given up: they will drink healths that not a man but themselves will drink: they will uphold the monarchical power of the R(oma)n Pontiff when all the world knows, it would unbishop every other prelate in Christendom to make him that monarch ... and ... would endanger all Civil Government". Booth professed to have done with all such "Papalians" counting as "real Catholics" only a handful of the enlightened gentry like Sir Henry Englefield or Sir Robert Throckmorton. The rest "are led by the nose by their P(riest)s": these "may be Roman", but no Catholics. [3.]

The motives for such displays of anti-Romanism have already been discussed; [4.] Henry Swinburne in old age confessed to an

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1. Burton, op.cit., II, p.195

2. CL. Gibson to Walmesley, Feb.24th/1793. The 'restraints' according to Gibson included a ban on conversions - ".. they wanted to hinder us from receiving anyone into the Church, if they should even apply to us .." Cf. ch I above.

3. Eyre Mss. (Ushaw), II, p.807 ff. James Booth to Lord Langdale, 4th Feb/1763.

4. Ch.II above, text and notes

early ambition to be considered "liberal and free from religious prejudice". [1.] Stephen Tempest's concern to appear "neither an Enthusiast nor Priest-ridden bigot" and Booth's claim that Catholics might be "easy enough" if they parted with "silly" "Papalian" notions, since "the spirit of persecution is pretty well over", tell the same story. [2.] Education was one of the issues on which 'lay and clerical', 'Liberal and reactionary' viewpoints clashed. "How comes it" asked one Catholic gentleman, "that the compleated science of the world, the Art of life, the great book of Mankind, is to be taught and learnt, not in, but out of the world, and by men whose very profession and studies almost totally exclude them from the knowledge of it?" [3.]

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1. Kirk, "Swinburne, Henry".

2. Stephen Tempest, Religio Laici (London 1764) p.22.

3. Bodleian Library Constable-Maxwell Papers (C229) fo.147, Wm. Constable to (?) Feb.6th/1780. Cf. the new President's account of the need for reform in 1780. - AAW 48 (Douay volume), 117 W. Gibson to James Talbot, July 21st, 1783.

> "The education here you know is peculiar. This is partly a Seminary and partly a place of education for Gentlemen: of all others perhaps ye best calculated for ye good of both ... But it is difficult to direct this mixt kind of education. If one does anything though with ye best intention in order to qualify for ye world, one seems to favour it, and this naturally hurts ye mind of one, who every day resolves to despise ye world and its vanities. If on ye contrary one excludes everything of ye kind, it is no longer ye same education. This last you know has been charged on ye College & many have affected to call it a mere Seminary in order to draw all off to what is called an academical education, in my opinion to ye general prejudice of Religion. This was to be remedied, it was thought impossible. The Augean stable was to be cleaned. It however has been effected, even Jo: Berington himself told me that what was thought impossible was found not to be so".

The object of his complaint was Douay College, and in 1780 a group of liberal laity organised a meeting in London to urge the reform of the Douay curriculum.[1.] The meeting approved a new set of 'General Regulations' for the college. Ironically, they were the work of Joseph Berington. The regulations introduced into the Douay timetable the study of English Literature, French, modern history, geography and the British constitution.[2.] These innovations represented a radical departure from a tradition dominated by a dictated course in Divinity and the study of the classics, and derived directly from the educational reforms and experiments of Priestley at Warrington Academy in the 1760's which had attracted the notice of the Berkeley brothers.[3.]

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1. Throck Mss. 'A sketch of General Regulations read & approved at a meeting of the Catholic Clergy and Laity, London, Feb.6th, 1780'. (Berington's hand) Constable Maxwell papers, it.cit. D. Milburn, A History of Ushaw College (Durham 1964), pp.12-3. "William Gibson, President of Douay" in Ushaw Magazine, LXVI (1956) p.69ff, 134ff. LXVII (1957) 11f.

2. The "Regulations" also cover dress, food, and discipline - all in a 'liberalizing' direction, as, for example, in Berington's suggestion that corporal punishment should be abolished.

3. For a detailed account of Priestley's reforms, Brian Simon, Studies in the History of Education 1780-1870. pp.17-71. Berington's proposed syllabus adheres closely to the pattern laid down in Priestley's educational works. Education remained an abiding "Cisalpine" interest. Works on Liberal Education are mentioned from time to time in John Throckmorton's Journal - Throck.Mss. Journals, November - December, 1783.

The Douay meeting marks the beginning of Berington's involvement with the growing "liberal" party among the gentry, and his position was consolidated by the publication of the "State and Behaviour". To more than one gentleman he seemed "the best English writer our schools have ever produced".[1] The Catholic progressive element itself was acquiring a greater cohesion and identity: in 1782 a committee of laymen was appointed by a meeting of Catholics in London, to further the cause of emancipation. Its members were "liberals" to a man, and many of them had been involved in the Douay reform meeting. A characteristic entry in the journal of one of their number, illustrates their cast of mind; "It is an unfortunate circumstance, which arises from the weakness of the human mind, that religion, which ought to enlarge, generally contracts and narrows our ideas and ways of thinking".[2] Two enlightened circles, therefore, the Dissenting and the Catholic, met in Berington, whose house at Oscott rapidly became the "rendezvous of much Catholic society". His friends the Galtons regularly had fish on Abstinence days for the benefit of their frequent Catholic visitors, and by 1787, John Throckmorton was on calling terms with Priestley.[3]

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1. Constable Maxwell Papers, fo.8. Wm. Constable to Marmaduke Tunstall (n.d. endorsed 1785 in pencil) (Petre), op.cit., passim.

2. Throck Mss. Journals, Nov. 1783.

3. Hankin, op.cit. I. pp.44-5. Throck Mss. Journals, 16th October 1787.

Rational Dissenters, like Catholics, stood without the law, and their common concern for toleration undoubtedly helps explain the unlikely conjunction of apparent religious opposites. Neither group, however, was very active during the early 1780's, a time of rapid political change. In their five years of office therefore, the Committee did little to further Emancipation, but in 1783 they sent a circular letter to the Vicars Apostolic which was full of portent for the future. Pointing out to the Vicars that a major cause of prejudice against Catholics was Protestant fears of the Papacy, the letter suggested that application be made to the Pope for the abolition of Vicarial government, and the appointment of Bishops in Ordinary, so lessening their apparent and actual dependence "more extensive and avowed than is usual in other countries that are in perfect unity with that See". [1.] The Vicars, however, were either opposed to the scheme, or lukewarm in their support, and nothing was done. The attempt, however, did alert the Bishops to a growing tendency of the laity to concern themselves with ecclesiastical and doctrinal matters. Thomas Talbot complained that "the Gentlemen of the Comm(ittee) seem to me to have an unaccountable Itching to meddle with affairs out of their sphere", [2.] while in 1785 the President of Douay remarked that "our gentlemen interest themselves more than they used to do in (church) matters as they have greater hopes of liberty of conscience". [3.]

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1. Dawn, I. pp.96-8

2. CL, T. Talbot to Bp. Walmesley, October 13th/1783

3. AAW, 48 (Douay Papers) William Gibson to Christopher Stonor, May 27th/1785.

Among the affairs "out of their sphere" in which the Committee were involved was the question of a new Catholic version of the Bible. Both the orthodox and liberal parties among English Roman Catholics laid great stress on the need for such a version, and when in January 1782 Lord Petre suggested that this work should be undertaken by his protege Alexander Geddes the Vicars made no opposition. [1.] Orthodox misgivings were aroused, however, by Geddes' Idea of a new ... Edition of the ... Bible, which made it clear that although he had reluctantly agreed to use the Douay/Challoner text as the basis of his version, it would in fact amount to a new translation, in which Protestant criticism would play an important part. [2.] The orthodox party accordingly set about a more conservative revision: Geddes reported to his cousin in November 1782 that "Secret cabals are forming against me ... a new patched up edition of Challoner will be hurried to the Press to get the start of mine". [3.] He was not unduly disturbed, for he felt that the orthodox moves had "dispenced" him from "raking in their rubbish for materials". Lord Petre viewed the matter less compacently, and thought himself "highly injured by their little dirty proceedings". [4.]

Orthodox suspicion of Geddes was not solely the result of

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1. Scottish Catholic Archives, Edinburgh (= SCA), Alexander Geddes to Bishop John Geddes, January 26th/1782.

2. A. Geddes Idea of a new English Edition of the Holy Bible for the use of Roman Catholics ... (n.p. n.d. - 1782)

3. SCA, A. Geddes to J. Geddes, Nov.17th/1782; Same to same, January 9th/1783.

4. SCA, A. Geddes to J. Geddes, Feb.12th/1783.

his proposals for the new translation. He had left Scotland in disgrace for having attended service at the Episcopal chapel at Banff in April 1780, and Bishop Hay saw to it that the English Vicars were informed of the fact.[1.] Geddes knew not tact, and made no secret of his extreme opinions on such matters as Episcopal and papal authority, and the place of reason in religion; his friendships with clergy of the Established Church did nothing to alleviate orthodox mistrust, and in 1783 Bishop Talbot of London refused him faculties for his district.[2.] In 1786 Geddes published a "Prospectus" of his translation, dedicated to Lord Petre, and calculated to horrify the orthodox. The Douay version was, according to Geddes, a "literal and barbarous translation from the Vulgate .. accompanied with acrimonious and injurious annotations". The Fathers of the Church had "little learning and less taste". The chief virtue of a translator must be "honest impartiality"; he must be "unwedded" to systems of any kind. Above all, he must be "extremely jealous of his most rational prepossessions."[3] Geddes anticipated that "bigotry and zealotism" would "roar aloud at (his) moderation". Certainly his book did nothing to heal the growing breach between Committee and Vicars. Complimentary copies of the Prospectus sent to Bishops Walmesley and

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1. For a full account, R. C. Fuller, "Alexander Geddes", Chapter I.

2. SCA, A. Geddes to J. Geddes, April 22nd/1783; same to same, May 6th/1783.

3. A. Geddes, Prospectus of a New Translation of the Holy Bible (Glasgow, 1786). pp.110,114,141-2.

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James Talbot remained unacknowledged: Lord Petre was acid - "They have not the manners of Gentlemen". [1.]

Geddes was not the only irritant factor in the relationship between the Vicars and the Committee. In 1784 an apostate Jesuit, Augustine Jenison, petitioned Bishop Hay for readmission to the Church; his repentance posed the Scottish Vicar with something of a problem, for Jenison had married after his apostacy, and though in Catholic eyes the marriage was invalid, in English law he had a wife. Eventually it was proposed that Mrs. Jenison be given an annuity in return for a letter releasing Jenison. [2.] The prodigal came to London in 1786 to seek the advice and help of Bishop Talbot, and at this point the Committee became involved. Geddes had been kept informed of the Jenison affair by his cousin John, Hay's coadjutor, and had made no bones about his opinion that Jenison ought to be released from his vow of celibacy and remain married, for marriage vows were, in his view, more binding than ecclesiastical vows. The whole affair was, in any case, potentially explosive. Protestants were unlikely to look favourably on Catholic attempts to break up a legal marriage, with all the appearance of an attempt to interfere with the law of the land. This was the light in which the Committee saw the matter, as an infringement of the Relief Act Oath of 1778. They refused to co-operate in Bishop Talbot's attempts to raise funds for

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1. ibid., p.146: SCA A. Geddes to J. Geddes, April 25th/1786.

2. Henry Foley SJ, Records of the English Province of the Society of Jesus, V. pp.636-7. SCA: A. Geddes to J. Geddes, Oct.26th/Nov.9th, Nov.18th, Nov.22nd/1784.

Mrs. Jenison, and bitter words were spoken about "bungling" bishops. [1]

Similar tensions were created early in 1787 in a dispute over the sale of an ex-Jesuit mission in the Northern District. Bishop Gibson had forbidden the sale of the mission to the Benedictines on the grounds that the ex-Jesuits had no corporate identity and the property therefore fell under his authority. He produced a decree of Propaganda to back his claim. The Committee claimed that this was a breach not only of the 1778 Oath, but of the statutes of Praemunire and Provisors, and an infringement of the "Liberties of the English Catholic Church". The Vicars were able to reassure the Committee that the matter was less serious than this, and the incident was settled amicably enough. A residue of bitterness remained, however, to increase the mutual suspicion of prelate and peer. Thomas Talbot commented tartly that "He did not know that the Catholic Committee was established to sit as a court of Jurisdiction to take cognizance of high Crimes and misdemeanors, to arraign Bishops before their Tribunal, and perhaps to permit them to exercise their Jurisdiction Quamdiu se bene gesserint." [2]

The most ominous clash between the Vicars and the Committee occurred in 1786, and sprang directly from Berington's writings. Many Catholics shared the conviction that "our religion suffers more from .. Calumny and Misrepresentation ... than from anything else, so an exposition of our doctrine in its native simplicity

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1. SCA, A. Geddes to J. Geddes, May 1, May 9, June 23, June 26/1786; Nov.30/1784.

2. Dawn, I. pp.104-107.

may be as effectual for removing ... prejudices ... as any Controversial treatise, and more willingly received". [1.] Accordingly, at the end of his "Reflections" Berington printed just such an exposition taken from a century-old pamphlet, Roman Catholick Principles in Reference to God and the King.[2.] Originally published to vindicate Catholics from accusations of complicity in Oates's Plot, the Principles had a long and honourable history. [3.] They had, however, been largely forgotten when Berington resuscitated them in 1785. Though he was apparently unaware of their origin and purpose, their attraction for him is easy to understand. [4.] In strong, non-theological English they rejected Papal claims to temporal power, and stated controversial doctrines, such as the veneration of saints and the doctrine of Justification, in a conciliatory and "minimalist" manner clearly intended for Protestant readers. Berington considered also that the age of the pamphlet would demonstrate the consistency of the Catholic community, particularly in matters of civil allegience. [5.] Nevertheless, he found it necessary to alter parts of the "Principles" - the word "King" was replaced by "Country"; the other changes were

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1. BAA, C.901, Revd. J. Foothead to John Kirk, March 17/1787.

2. First published in 1680, under the title Roman Catholick Principles, in reference to God and the King, explained in a letter to a friend, and now MADE PUBLIC..: John Kirk published a version of the Principles with An Enquiry respecting the Editions and the Author of that "Valuable Tract" (London 1815) Kirk used Berington's amended text (= K).

3, K. pp.29-35.

4. Reflections, p.116

5. K. p.44.

more significant. A passage on general councils was altered in a decidedly "Cisalpine" direction, the bishops being dubbed "The body representative", [1.] a democratisation which did not go unnoticed. [2.] Equally characteristic were the omission of the papal title "Vicar of Christ", and the rephrasing of a passage on the exclusive right of the Roman Church to call herself the Church of Christ.[3.] In this amended form the Principles were to become a standard Cisalpine formulary.[4.] The Catholic Committee circulated copies to Protestant statesmen, Cisalpine apologists and pamphleteers quoted them, even on complex doctrinal questions,[5.] and many years later Berington and John Kirk were to formulate round them one of the nineteenth century's most enduring controversial works, The Faith of Catholics.[6.]

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1. K.p.76. The original section read "General Councils (which are the Church of God representative) have no commission from Christ ..." and became "The Pastors of the Church - who are the body representative - either dispersed or in the council have received ...."

2. Milner Supplementary Memoirs, pp.272-3.

3. K.p.78, 74. The altered passage originally declared that the "marks" of unity, catholicity, etc., were applicable "to no other Church", Berington's version stated that these marks were evidently applicable to the Roman Church, without any excluding clause.

4. Catholic Committee's Second Blue Book (n.p. n.d.-1791), p.14.
Charles Butler, Collected Works, IV, pp.219-237.
Gentleman's Magazine 57 : pp 25, 107, 205
Sir John Throckmorton A Second Letter addressed to the Catholic Clergy of England .. (London 1791) appendix II, p.lxxviii.
(= Throckmortom 2).

5. (T. Potts) An enquiry into the moral and political tendency of the religion called Roman Catholic .. London 1790, p.31.

6. Berington and Kirk: Faith of Catholics confirmed by Scripture and attested by the Fathers ... London 1813.

In January 1786, John Throckmorton, a Committee-man, wrote to each of the Vicars Apostolic other than Thomas Talbot, in the Midland district. He observed that, ".. previous to, or upon an application .. for a further redress of our greivances, it would be expedient to give the Public a genuine exposition of our Principles both as to faith and allegiance, with the signatures of the bishops to give a proper Sanction to it". The Principles, he suggested, were ideal for that purpose, and he claimed to have received Bishop Thomas Talbots' verbal approval of the scheme. In asking for the bishops' co-operation, he also suggested a few "trifling alterations".[1]

Throckmorton's proposed changes, like Berington's, are worth noticing. One or two were purely verbal;[2.] others were more theological and clearly intended to appease Protestants. In a section on the forgivness of sins, Throckmorton wished to add the sentence "But it is God who interiourly absolves the Sinner, while his minister exteriourly exercises his function", and in the section on the Mass he suggested the following: "But we admit no new propitiation for sin; our Sacrifice only serving to apply to us the all sufficient merits of the Great Sacrifice of the Cross". Uncomfortable references to "heresy and "schism" liable to offend Protestants were expunged, and one alteration was peculiarly Cisalpine; the statement that Papal pronouncements are not binding unless approved by a council was modified to a declaration that the assent of "the Church" is necessary - almost certainly in deference to the Gallican view that the decrees even

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1. Throck.Mss. John Throckmorton to the Bishop,s Jan.15th, 1786.

2. ibid., The deposing doctrine is termed "intolerable and Unchristian" instead of "impious and damnable". K.p.78.

of General Councils only bind in any Christian country after formal acceptance by the government.[1.] The replies of the bishops were not encouraging. Matthew Gibson in the North was non-commital, and passed the buck to James Talbot of the London district.[2.] Bishop Walmesley of the Western District, thought the Principles composed "with great judgement and precision", but objected to the proposed alteration of the article on absolution, considering it derogatory of the judicial nature of confession, and declined in any case to sign any document which might bring him into the public eye as a Catholic bishop.[3.] James Talbot's reply was equally discouraging. Since both Berington and Throckmorton had thought it necessary to alter the Principles, he wrote, so too might everyone called upon to sign them. He was for signing the whole, or none, and since he considered the document too long anyway, he suggested a shorter formula by Bishop Challenor would be more suitable.[4.] Undaunted, Throckmorton offered to abandon all his alterations,[5.] but Talbot was adamant, and would only consent to using the Principles unsigned and according to the original edition.[6.] Tempers began to fray, and a note of acrimony entered the hitherto polite exchange. Talbot's reluctance to sign is explained in one

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1. Throck.Mass. loc.cit.
2. Throck.Mss. Mathew Gibson to J. Throckmorton, Jan.23rd,1786.
3. Throck.Mass. Charles Walmesley, Jan.26th, 1786.
4. Throck.Mss. Talbot to Throckmorton, Jan.27th,1786.
5. Throck.Mss. Throckmorton to Talbot, Jan.28th,1786.
6. Throck.Mss. Talbot to Throckmorton, Feb.4th,1786.

of his letters to his brother in the Midland district. He was disinclined, he wrote,

".. to follow implicitly the directions of our Committee in that manner .. in subscribing a doctrinal test chosen by them. If such a test is necessary at this time, they should have told us why, and asked the thing of us, instead of choosing for us".[1.]

Throckmorton's letter did little to molify the bishop, for it contained a numbered list of questions, asking whether Talbot would sign the original 1680 edition of the Principles, or the modified version, or, should he decline signing before publication, whether he would ".. if called upon give your approbation of the Doctrine of it".[2.] This was not tactful, and Talbot's reply betrayed his irritation. "..I must know first by what authority I am called upon .. B(isho)ps in ye Catholic Church have hitherto allowed to be teachers and Judges of Doctrine, and not subject to be catechised by every individual".[3.] Mr. Throckmorton persisted:

"I hope it is Cathechising (sic) you or Mr. Gibson too much to desire to know the result of your deliberations".[4.] Alas, Talbot thought it not merely "catechising", but "dictating" and "meddling", expressed amazement at Throckmorton's tenacity, and in so many words told him to mind his own business.[5.] This

1. Milner, Supplementary Memoirs, p.266.
2. Throckm.Mss. Throckmorton to Talbot, Feb.26th,1786.
3. Throck.Mss. Talbot to Throckmorton, Feb.28th,1786.
4. Throck.Mss. Throckmorton to Talbot, Mar.2nd,1786.
5. Throck.Mss. Talbot to Throckmorton, Mar.6th,1786.

evoked a passionate reply from Throckmorton, which throws a good deal of light on the whole negotiation, and on something at least of the driving power behind Cisalpinism itself -

"Suffering continually for my Religion, and having the additional mortification of seeing & hearing my principles traduced and misrepresented I think I have the right to call on my pastors .. to give the Public a fair and Explicit Exposition of our Doctrine .. in proposing one to your consideration I am sure I do not cathecise (sic) &, if desiring to have your decision upon the subject is derogatory to the dignity of a Bishop it claims a Privilege I should be very unwilling to grant it .." [1.]

Nevertheless, for a time it seemed that an understanding might after all be reached; Talbot offered to visit Throck-morton to discuss the matter amicably, [2.] but he was forced to abandon his proposed visit, and the negotiations came, meanwhile, to a sudden halt. Bishop Gibson wrote to say that some of his senior clergy objected to the Principles, and he would therefore not sign them. [3.] Equally suddenly, Talbot categorically refused to give even a verbal approval of the Principles on the entirely new grounds that one article inclined towards .. ye Solifidian System w(hi)ch you know was that of ye first Reformers". If a test was necessary, he wrote, it should be

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1. Throck.Mss. Throckmorton to Talbot, Mar.9th,1786.
2. Throck.Mss. Talbot to Throckmorton, Mar.13th,1786.
   Throckmorton to Talbot, Mar.16th,1786.
3. Throck.Mss. Gibson to Talbot, Mar.17th,1786.

a new one "in toto". [1.]

These were ominous words, for a new "Test" was indeed forthcoming, in the form of the Protestation which initiated the divisions which troubled the English Catholics for the remainder of the century. The negotiations had other, less spectacular, effects also, which themselves contributed to the approaching storm, for the Committee were left with the conviction that the Bishops and their advisers were more concerned for their own authority and with scholastic wrangling than with the suffering of the Catholic gentry. [2.] The Bishops for their part, became increasingly resentful of "lay interference" in their affairs. It would be incorrect to make too much of this awareness so early in the disputes, since, for all his objections and cavils, James Talbot signed the copy of the Principles given to Pitt by the Committee in 1788. [3.] Certainly, the Cisalpines seemed totally unaware that any question of Episcopal preserves was involved, and consistently revealed an attitude, common enough among English Catholics, and betrayed in an erased sentence in one of Throckmorton's letters to Talbot -

"I believe it is customary in ordinary transactions of life between Gentlemen to expect an answer to a Proposal which is made to them ..." [4.] Episcopal rulings, or gentlemanly discussions? On that rock the crazy barque of Cisalpinism was to founder.

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1. Throck.Mss. Talbot to Throckmorton, April 15th,1786. Milner, Supplementary Memoirs, p.267

2. My artide, Downside Review, Vol.88, no.292, July 1970, p.249 and note 20.

3. Butler, op.cit. p.222. The edition of the Principles used by the Committee was published in 1788, but without place or date.

4. Throck.Mss. Throckmorton to Talbot, Mar.9th,1786.

CHAPTER IV

'Bella, Horrida Bella'. [1.]

'Holy Wars

Blue Book

Very Interesting'. [2.]

"Why weeps Religion? Whence this foolish love
Of innovation? Whence this mis-plac'd zeal?
That modern flexibility? Those looks
Observant of the smile or frown of those
Whose wealth alone sustains the tott'ring cause
Else now thrown down! Can Discord still reside
In breasts, alas! for closest union fram'd?" [3.]

I. THE PROTESTATION AND OATH

In March 1787 the Dissenters, anxious to exploit the prevailing liberal mood, applied for the repeal of the Corporation and Test acts; they sought to further their own cause by contrasting their consistent loyalty to the Crown with the unsound political principles of Catholics. Their campaign manifesto, "The Case of the Protestant Dissenters" claimed that the Test Act had been aimed at Papists, and for the nation's sake had been acquiesced in by the Dissenters, whose own loyalty had never been in question. [4.] Stung by "a disquieting illiberality of sentiment unworthy of this enlightened and tolerant age" [5.] both Berington and Geddes published replies. Geddes' pamphlet, in addition to an appeal for co-operation between Protestant and Catholic "fellow dissenters" contained the by now usual attacks on the usurpations and "supposed prerogatives" of a Papacy "screwed up to the most enormous pitch", and on the religious orders: it also contained an approving reference to the Josephinist reforms in Austria and Tuscany, and expressed the hope that "a few more years will probably bring the form of the Catholic hierarchy back to that of the first centuries". [6.] Berington's Address to the Protestant Dissenters, [7.]

1. SCA, Alexander Geddes to John Geddes, Dec.21/1789.
2. Jottings on a fragment among the Barrow Papers, Preston Record Office, RC CL 2/59.
3. Verses on the Consecration of the Bishop of Acanthos, by the Students in Poetry and Rhetoric of the English College at Douay (London 1791), pp.8-9.
4. A. Lincoln, Some Political and Social Ideas of English Dissent, (Cambridge 1938) pp.238-247. U . Henriques, Religious Toleration in England (London 1961), pp.57 ff, 91.
5. A. Geddes, Letter to a Member of Parliament on the Case of the Protestant Dissenters (London 1787), p.21.
6. ibid, pp.26-29.
7. J. Berington, An Address to the Protestant Dissenters (2nd Ed. Birmingham 1787).

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6. ibid, pp.26-29.
7. J. Berington, An Address to the Protestant Dissenters (2nd Ed. Birmingham 1787).

was altogether more substantial, and more influential. Declaring himself willing to associate only with "men of liberal minds" he complained that the dissenters wished "to hold us out as the only obnoxious party; as if in the proportion we shall appear guilty, your innocence will be prominent. Could not your cause rest on its own merits?". [1.] The tone of the pamphlet made it quite clear that Berington considered Rational Dissenter and Catholic to be natural allies. He complimented Priestley on the skill and perseverance of his attempts to lay "gunpowder" under the "old walls" of the Establishment, and declared himself "an enemy to all ecclesiastical establishments". He claimed that of all the religious bodies in England, the Catholics were "the most liberal, the freest from rancour, from prepossession, and from religious antipathies", and he praised "free discussion" and the growing spirit of toleration throughout Europe. [2.] His points were reinforced in the second edition of the pamphlet by the addition of a letter to Berington from Priestley, praising Catholic liberality, and the example of "such men as yourself, of Dr. Geddes, and others whom I could name of your communion, (with whom I think it an honour to be acquainted).." [3.] Berington's protest was effective, and subsequent editions of the Case omitted the offensive passages.

The Repeal motion was defeated in the Commons on March 28th 1787. [4.] Two weeks later the Catholic Committee, due now for re-

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1. J. Berington An Address to the Protestant Dissenters (2nd Ed. Birmingham 1787) pp. 22, 30.

2. ibid, pp.40, 41, 44, 46, 52, 54.

3. ibid., pp.57-61.

4. Henriques, op cit., p.60

election, and anxious to take advantage of the renewed interest in legal reform, published an address to the Catholics, advocating the replacement of the Vicars by Bishops-in-ordinary as a means of lessening Protestant prejudice, and urging Catholics to press for toleration. [1.] After their re-election in May, the Committee dispatched a letter to the Vicars drawing their attention to the proposal for Bishops-in-ordinary. [2.] As in 1783 the Vicars were unenthusiastic. Talbot of London spoke for them all when he declared himself "... content to go on in ye old track which has succeeded so well for ye last hundred years". [3.] In any case, it was felt that more than a change in status of the Bishops was required to remove Protestant prejudice. When the question had first been raised one of Walmesley's advisers had remarked that ".... As long as we have images and Mass & Service in an unknown tongue; in short as long as we remain Roman Catholics or Papists, we shall, in a Protestant country be unpopular ... it is to be presumed that the Committee would not give up those titles for the support of which so many of their ancestors did heretofore suffer bitter persecution". [4.]

Orthodox fears that the Committee's proposals represented the mere

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1. Dawn I, pp.108 ff, II 260-265. The Committee urged the advantages of having pastors "thus chosen by the flock they are to teach and direct, and in conjunction with which, they would be competent to regulate every part of the national Church discipline".!! (my underlining).

2. Clifton, Committee to Walmesley n.d. (Letter 68 in Vol.1787), Dawn, I, p.114. The new Committee comprised Lords Petre, Clifford and Stourton, Sir John Lawson, Sir Henry Englefield, John Throckmorton, William Fermor, Thomas Hornyold and William Jerningham. In May 1788 three clergy were added - Bishop Charles Berington, Bishop James Talbot, and Joseph Wilkes, O.S.B.

3. Clifton, James Talbot to Walmesley, Oct.9th/1787

4. Clifton, C. Forester to Walmesley, Sept.27th/1783.

tip of the iceberg, that the reform of the episcopate would usher in a more radical and unorthodox programme, were increased by rumours from abroad. In the early 1780's a number of pastorals from bishops of the Austrian Empire were translated into English, protesting against Josephinist "reforms" such as the minimising of Papal authority, and attacks on the cult of saints; [1.] Cisalpine sympathy with those reforms was widely known. [2.] News of "new opinions .. in essential points, and the order of discipline entirely changed" in Tuscany, greatly agitated Bishop Walmesley, who saw in the Committee's suggestions direct parallels with the Tuscan schism. He made attempts to 'pack' the General meeting which elected the committee in May 1787 "lest some strange proposals are moved relative to Religion.." [3.] and by August of the same year was discussing the Pistoian 'reforms' and the Committee's proposals in the same letter. [4.] The Jesuit Charles Forrester's claim that the Committee proposals suggested that ".. the Cath(olic) Clergy, Nobility and Gentry shall for the future have little

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1. A Letter from Cardinal Bathianim Primate of Hungary to the Emperor Joseph II (London 1782)

   A Pastoral Letter of his Eminence, the Cardinal Archbishop of Mechlin, for .. Lent .. 1783 (London 1783) - The injunction of the Archbishop of Mechlin to the Laity not to "desire to know more than is proper for you to know" and to be "contented to be instructed .. under .. your Pastors" would have received a fervent endorsement from the Vicars.

2. From the writings of pamphleteers such as Berington and Geddes and the known views of Committee supporters like Robert Berkeley - cf latter's Considerations on the Oath of Supremacy (London 1778) on The usurped power of the Bishops of Rome .." the source of "many of the abuses and scandals in (the) church, and all the schisms and divisions among the Western Christians ..." pp.13-14. cf. Upholland, R. Bannister to Henry Rutter, July 7th/1787 - the Committee "learn their Catechism .. from our Modern Abeillard (Berington), whose .. rancour against papal jurisdiction knows no bounds".

3. Clifton, James Waters to C. Walmesley, Dec.2nd/1786 (from Rome)
   Walmesley to W. Sharrock, April 26th/1787.

4. Clifton, Walmesley to Sharrock, August 3rd/1787.

or nothing to do with the Pope, & shall henceforth form in England a Christian Church by itself" gained plausibility. [1.] One orthodox supporter at Douay complained that "Religion & Ecclesiastical matters seem more than ever to attract the attention of the age" and condemned the "spirit of innovation" which threatened the English Church. He deplored the influence over Lord Petre exercised by Geddes, whose principles were "rash and dangerous" if not heretical - "I wish no genius of this description may be at the bottom of the schemes .." [2.] The Committee meanwhile petitioned Rome for Bishops in Ordinary, [3.] and in May 1788 entered into negotiations with Pitt for Catholic Relief. A memorial stating the Catholic grievances was presented to him on May 9th. Pitt was encouraging, but asked for evidence that the doctrine of the Papal deposing and dispensing power was not part of Catholic belief. At Petre's request, Geddes drew up a paper to that effect, and a series of questions on the dispensing power were despatched to six Catholic Universities. [4.] The

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1. Clifton, Forester to Walmesley, Sept.27th/1783. Walmesley feared that the Committee planned reforms not only of the Episcopate, but of the liturgy, and abolition of obedience to Rome. (AAW 42/127. Walmesley to Talbot, 23rd Dec.1787, wrongly dated 15th Dec.1785 by Ward, Dawn I, p.100). cf. also Clifton, Pilling to Walmesley, April 17th, 1787, on 'daring innovations' and Upholland, Henry Rutter to R. Bannister, March 29th,1787 "A letter from London says there will soon be two sorts of Cathol(ic)s there, some admitting the Pope's superiority, others rejecting it entirely ... such are our enlightened times!"

2. Clifton, J. Sharrock to Bishop W. Sharrock, Douay April 10th,1788. SCA, Geddes to Bishop Geddes, 15th April, 1788.

3. Clifton, Walmesley to W. Sharrock, Aug.3rd, 1787. Leeds, Christopher Stonor (Rome) to M. Gibson, Feb.15th, 1788.

4. Ward, Dawn, I. pp.126 ff. A. Geddes to J. Reid, 19th May 1788. The six universities were Sorbonne, Louvain, Douay, Alcala, Valladolid and Salamanca.

Cisalpines were apprehensive about the possible answers to these questions. Joseph Wilkes, one of the three mewly elected clerics on the Committee, warned Throckmorton that the universities should be chosen carefully - "Rome gives up nothing, which it can hold in its grasp, and ... ultramontane notions still prevail .. out of the dominions of Rrance". [1.]

The correspondence between Throckmorton and the Bishops in 1786 had revealed the Cisalpine conviction that the best way to allay suspicion of Catholics was by a declaration of faith, free from hair-splitting - "a few, plain, undeniable assertions". [2.] With this in mind the Committee now persuaded Talbot of London to sign the edition of the Principles which they presented to Pitt, but undoubtedly something more public was desired. The Rights of Dissenters ... asserted , republished in 1788, urged Catholics to produce such a Profession of Faith, and a Cisalpine pamphleteer in 1787 reiterated the suggestion. [3.] The Orthodox, in fact feared that the 'Profession' would take the form of an Oath, which might well be heterodox, for the Cisalpines were known to look kindly on the Oath of Supremacy. [4.]

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1. Throck Mss. J. Wilkes to J. Throckmorton Nov.9th,1788.
Wilkes' evidence for the prevalence of Ultramontanism included the condemnation of Febronius, and Eybel's "Quid est Pape?", and the opposition to Joseph II's reforms.

2. Throck Mss. loc.cit.

3. C. Butler Historical Memoirs IV, pp.12,16.
Reflections on the Oaths which are tendered to the subject in this Country (London 1787) p.45. The pamphlet closely resembles the earlier pamphlets of Robert Berkeley, and is almost certainly his.

4. Clifton, Walmesley to W. Sharrock, Feb.14th,1788.
Sir John Lawson to W. Sharrock (n.d. received June17th,1788)
Although a Committee member Lawson was a moderate, and was uneasy about many Cisalpine activities.
(Berkeley) Reflections on Oaths pp.6 - 11 - claiming that the Oath could be understood in a Catholic sense, but declaring it "ambiguous and undefined".
Ward, Dawn I, p.112 ff.

The Vicars began to manifest a sense of beleaguerment, and Bishop Gibson felt the need to admonish James Talbot that "as long as we hold our commission from R(ome), our standard and rule of conduct must be derived from thence"; the conspiratorial tone of his post-script reveals the Vicars' growing panic - "Hector, be steady - commit to the flames -". [1.] In fact the Committee's proposed Relief Bill contained no new Oath, but in November 1788 Lord Stanhope, chief promotor of the Dissenters' cause in the Lords, suggested that the Catholics should come forward with a statement of their principles, and proposed one of his own composition. This was the infamous "Declaration and Protestation of the English Catholics". [2.] Designed to disclaim "tenets falsely imputed" to Catholics, the "Protestation" was a largely negative document. It denied that the Pope or Church could absolve Catholics from allegiance to their government, or that any immoral action could be justified "under colour that it is done either for the good of the Church, or obedience to any Ecclesiastical power ..." These disclaimers were nothing new, but there was much else to alarm the orthodox, such as the statement that "We acknowledge no infallibility in the Pope", or those to the effect that "no Church ... hath ... or ought to have any jurisdiction or authority within this Realm, that can ... interfere with the ... Constitution ... thereof ... neither the Pope nor ... any Ecclesiastical power ... can ... dispense with ... any compact or oath whatsoever ... no sin whatever can be forgiven at the will of any Pope or ... priest". [3.]

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1. AAW, 42/128. M. Gibson to J. Talbot, Jan.22nd, 1788.

2. Butler, Memoirs IV, pp.15 ff.
   Dawn, I. pp.126 - 151.

3. Text in full in Dawn, I. pp.139-142.

From the first the Committee expected opposition to the "Protestation". At a meeting between Stanhope, Petre and Wilkes, a few of the more obvious flaws in the Protestation were removed. [1.] James Barnard, Vicar General of the London District, thought the document as it stood seemed to disavow the spiritual powers of the Church, but on being assured by the Committee and their supporting clergy that no such meaning was intended, signed. [2.] The Vicars, too, disapproved of the document's ambiguity [3.] and even supporters of the Protestation recognised its imperfections. "Something might be objected to the wording of the piece perhaps ... but as nothing appeared at which Religion could take offence it was thought better to stick close to the original form so as to avoid every appearance of equivocation or duplicity". [4.]

A vigorous committee campaign followed in which eventually all the Vicars and most of the Clergy and Gentry were persuaded to sign. [5.] The difficulties of those who objected to the "Protestation" stemmed mainly from the ambiguity of its language, but also from the vehemence of its repudiation of papal interference. Few English Catholics held the doctrine of Papal Infallibility at this time, but it was nevertheless felt that the tone of the document was 'uncatholic', and the "Protestation" served to crystalize the vague misgiving which had nagged the orthodox for some time. Many Catholics,

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1. Upholland, Thomas Rigby to John Rigby, March 11th,1789.
2. Dawn, I. pp.145-6.
3. ibid., pp.134-138, 147
4. Upholland, Thomas Rigby to John Rigby, March 11th, 1789.
5. Dawn, I. pp.145-151.

too, suspected the protestant source of the document, and resented the Committee's high-handedness. One Catholic squire complained that "these new doctrines ... have been assented to by the clergy & ... Laity ... in London with(ou)t consulting their rustic friends ... what pretty fellows compose this committee which has taken these tests without communicating with the rest of the body & perhaps got them into a hobble either to sign or to be pointed out, as objects for the penal laws ..." [1]. Nevertheless, opposition to the "Protestation" was overcome, and it was eventually signed "by 1523 persons of rank, fortune and respectability", 240 of them priests, including three Vicars Apostolic. [2].

The Protestation, remodelled in the form of a petition, was duly presented to Parliament on May 9th, 1789; the ministry suggested to the Committee that their Bill would be greatly improved if the Protestation were to be included in it, recast as an Oath. The Committee, aware of the reluctance with which the Protestation had been signed, were "at first backward in acceding to the proposal". But "... it was strongly represented to them that 'new benefits called for new assurances of fidelity'", and under pressure from their parliamentary supporters, and Oath was in fact framed, which in its original form was "an exact transcript of the Protestation". [3].

The ministry made a number of alterations, and the revised Oath was submitted to the Clerical members of the Committee, who agreed that it contained nothing "contrary to faith or morals". [4].

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1. E.C. Marmaduke Tunstall to Thos. Eyre, April 4th,1789. For some of the doctrinal difficulties raised, see Milner, Supplementary Memoirs, pp.56-57, Dawn I, 144-5.

2. Dawn, I. 145-151. F. Plowden The Case Stated ... occasioned by the Act of Parliament ... for the Relief of the English Roman Catholics (London 1791), p.59.

3. Dawn, I. p.157

4. ibid. loc.cit. Upholland, J.Archer to Dr.J.Rigby, Oct.29th,1789.

On June 26th, 1789 the new Oath was published by the Committee in Woodfall's Register. It fell like a bombshell among the Catholic community, for it was more extreme in expression than the Protestation. Perhaps the least attractive feature of the proposed Bill was that it was not intended to bring legal relief to all Catholics, but only to such as took the Oath. These would be known in law as "Protesting Catholic Dissenters", since they "protested" against the Popish tenets attributed to them, and "dissented" from the Established Church. This rather foolish title became the centre of the controversy about the Oath, but it was by no means the only stumbling-block. Stanhope had urged that for consistency's sake "... the whole of the Oaths of Allegiance and Abjuration and as much of the Oath of Supremacy as Catholics do not consider contrary to faith should be inserted in the Oath ..." [1]. Accordingly, the new Oath was laden with phrases certain to offend men who still remembered the days of priest-hunts, and who read with reverence of the sufferings of their martyr fathers. The deposing doctrine was termed "heretical", as in the condemned Oath of James I, which had divided Catholics of the seventeenth century as effectively as the new Oath was to do in the eighteenth. [2] Ambiguity abounded in the section of the Oath which declared that the pope had no jurisdiction nor "any Spiritual power or jurisdiction ... that can directly or indirectly interfere with ... the constitution of this kingdom ... or with the ... ecclesiastical government thereof, as by law established". Phrasing so reminiscent of the Oath of Supremacy was

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1. Circular letter of the Catholic Committee To The Catholics of England, Nov.25th, 1789 (= 1st Blue Book)

2. Dom Maurus Lunn, "English Benedictines and the Oath of Allegiance" Recusant History 10, No.3, October 1969.

certain to be refused by many Catholics. Then again, the possibility of "explaining" awkward passages in a Catholic sense, had been excluded by the clause in the Oath which stated that it was to be taken in the "plain and ordinary" sense of the words. Finally, the exclusiveness of the Bill implied that anyone who could not take the Oath held the opinions reprobated by it. This tendency to differentiate between Catholics had indeed been present in the Protestation: [1.] it was to become an increasingly prominent part of Cisalpine apologetic.[2.]

The Oath appeared in an atmosphere already charged with rumour. Arthur O'Leary, the Irish 'patriot-priest' living in London, and on friendly terms with the Committee, informed a correspondent a few days before the appearance in Woodfall's Register that: "... the petitioners call themselves "Catholic Dissenters" and to gratify the framers of their absurd protestation, become the implied accusers of all the Catholics upon the earth, in the following words, "We are not answerable for any wicked doctrine which may be held by other Catholics"". [3.] Others, farther afield and less well-informed, were haunted by grislier spectres. Thomas Weld of Lulworth believed that the new bill would involve an Oath ".. by which we renounce popery ... and therefore ... the act of Parliament ... will be entitled an act to relieve Protestant Dissenters and prevent the growth of Popery and Catholicity". [4.]

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1. In the words ".. we the English Catholics ought not to suffer for or on account of any wicked or erroneous doctrines that may be held by any other Catholics.." cf. Dawn I, pp.164-6.
2. First Blue Book, pp.2,4, J.Throckmorton A Letter addressed to the Catholic Clergy of England(Second Ed.London 1792)(=Throckmorton III)p.ix
3. T.England, Life of Arthur O'Leary (London 1822) p.215.
4. Clifton, Thomas Weld to Bp.Walmesley, April 20th,1789. Dawn I,p.150. Though Walmesley wrote that he was "inclined to think it has been exaggerated to you"(May 4th, draft on same sheet). Weld's surmises were not far wrong. A draft version of the Oath among the Throck. Mss. in fact headed "An Oath against Popery".

Ten days after its appearance Berington was reporting to Throckmorton that disputes were already in progress over the orthodoxy of the Oath, and expressing relief that the Society of Jesus with its casuistry no longer existed, otherwise ".. we should have been all by the ears". [1.] All the same, he had misgivings about the Oath himself, and a month later expressed his doubts to Charles Butler the Committee Secretary. He pointed out that as it stood the Oath "... must seem to go further than the Protestation, or at least to differ from it ..." and he compared it to the Oath of James I which, he declared, was ".. framed .. to harass the consciences of the ignorant and timid-minded. The introduction of the word Heretical strengthens the suspicion". He prophesied that "... the opposition will not .. be laid, unless the exceptionable passages be cancelled, and the Protestation be literally adhered to". [2.] He was not the only liberal to have reservations. The Reverend James Archer supported it as a whole, but informed a friend that, like Berington, he "... never could bear" the title "Protesting Catholic Dissenters". [3.] The orthodox were more pointed. "...Some laymen at London with Bp. Berington, co-adjutor to Bp.Tho(mas) Talbot and one Wilks a monk, have coined w(ha)t they call an oath of allegiance, but in very deed an abjuration of Cath(olic) faith and tenets". [4.] The baleful glance of authority fell especially

1. Throck. Mss. Berington to Throckmorton, July 5th,1789
2. Throck. Mss. Berington to Butler, August 15th,1789
3. Upholland, J. Archer to John Rigby, Oct. 25th 1789.
4. Letter of Robert Bannister, Feb.5th, 1790, printed in Ushaw College Magazine, 14. (1904), p.129.

upon the Committee's clerical supporters, particularly Bp. Charles Berington and Joseph Wilkes. The gentry might at least plead ignorance, but these men were regarded as willfully abandoning Catholic truth. They seemed, wrote one critic, "... to set out with this leading principle that everything but faith is to be given up, to satisfy the gentry: & however stranger, they say for the good of religion": [1.] Robert Bannister, on a visit to the Midlands, was horrified to find the clergy there "infected" with "scandalous" opinions, and judged that they were for going "... as near to the P(rotestant)s as their consciences will permit (particularly if they form their consciences on ... the committee & Jos B-r-ngt-n)". [2.] Charles Plowden thought the Oath "a laboured affectation to assimilate our religion to that of the reformed churches, to bring it down nearly to the level of protestantism.." [3.] This tendency was of course rooted in the Cisalpine eagerness to conciliate Protestants; all the same the orthodox were right in sensing another dimension behind the surface liberality. The supporters of the Oath were drawn, to a man, from among "the more enlightened of (the) body", and showed a willingness to reduce Catholic belief to a 'reasonable' core. Cisalpine preachers, especially in the fashionable London Chapels, drew protestant audiences, and their doctrine was pitched accordingly.[4.] Berington's Sunday school plan and his conviction

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1. Clifton, W. Pilling to W. Sharrock, Sept.14th, 1789
2. E. C. Robert Bannister to Thomas Eyre, Oct. 31st, 1789
3. Charles Plowden, An answer to the Second Blue Book(London 1791), p.14.
4. Beverley, DD CC/147/1. Thos Clifford to Walter Clifford, 6th Oct. 1790, on Berington's preaching to Protestants, and see the printed sermons of Cisalpines such as James Wheeler, James Archer, and Thomas Hussey.

that only "a thin wall" separated Catholics and Anglicans were not isolated phenomena - John Kirk, for example, thought that ".. when ye essentials of Catholicity are left untouched ye nearer it is brought to a level with Prot(estantism) ye better". It was inevitable therefore, that the orthodox should see the Oath not merely as a clumsily phrased civil test, but as a direct challenge which might end in schism. One episcopal supporter voiced the general fear that "... we are on the point of a division, which our enemies want". [1.]

On October 21st the Vicars Apostolic met in London. The condemnation of the Oath which resulted was a foregone conclusion: Bishop Gibson had let it be known that if the Oath were not condemned he would "retire immediately & appeal to Rome". He made determined attempts to exclude Bishop Berington, and although the latter at Thomas Talbot's insistence was present, and protested against the Vicars' proceedings, a joint Pastoral was drawn up declaring the Oath unlawful to be taken, without giving any reasons for doing so.[2.] They then dispersed to their respective districts and Walmesley informed the Committee of the measures agreed on by the Bishops. The Committee immediately attempted to have the Encyclical suppressed, and the Talbot brothers agreed to do so for the sake of peace. However Gibson, in whose district opposition to the Oath was strongest, and Walmesley, whose advisers were pressing for strong measures to "awe into submission" the Committee and so prevent "spiritual anarchy" published the Pastoral.

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1. Kirk, Mss. notes in his copy of Plowden's Answer, Oscott II, 2681. Clifton Pilling to Sharrock Sept. 14/1789.

2. Dawn I, pp.178-9.
   Clifton, W. Pilling to W. Sharrock, Oct.2nd, 1789.

To the Cisalpines the Bishops' action seemed a betrayal of the Protestation, likely to cause the Government to distrust any future professions of allegiance. James Archer had earlier been packed off to the Western District to sound out the clergy there, and found to his disgust that "... they almost all retracted the Protestation.." thus reflecting an "indelible blot" on the character of Catholics.[1.] The Pastoral, and subsequent withdrawal of signatures from the Protestation by leading members of the orthodox[2.] therefore provoked a sterner retrenchment behind the Oath by the Cisalpines. "If my life depended upon the event", declared Lord Petre, ".. no consideration should ever induce me to consent to an Oath which did not come up to the principles contained in the Protest".[3.] Archer spoke for all when he observed that "... the case is we have now gone so far and committed ourselves with Government that it is too late to recede".[4.] Accordingly, a justification of the Oath by the Committee appeared in print on November 25th. This pamphlet, the first of the "Blue Books" answered, point by point, the criticisms which had been made of the Oath. The Committee denied outright that the Oath was anything more than a declaration of Allegiance, the implication being that the Vicars had no authority to condemn or approve such a Civil declaration.[5.] All the "odium and ... oppression" under which

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1. Upholland, Archer to Rigby, Oct. 29th, 1789

2. Bishop Walmesley and Robert Bannister.

3. Throck.Mss. Petre to Throckmorton, Oct.28th, 1789
   Clifton, Wm. Fermor to Bp. Walmesley, Oct.31st, 1789.
   Same to same, Nov.5th, 1789.

4. Upholland, Archer to Rigby, Oct.29th, 1789

5. Ibid.

Catholics suffered they ascribed to the "impudent interference" of Paul V in the controversy over James I's oath of Allegiance;[1.] - and the Vicars' condemnation of the Oath, and any future Roman disapproval, they dismissed on the grounds that Rome had condemned the Oath of James I, which the English Catholics had nevertheless taken in substance in 1778. The account marked a significant change in attitude towards the Oath of James - only a few months before Berington had described this Oath as deliberately devisive; now the Committee describe it as drawn up with "elaborate care, and the nicest exactness" by a benevolent king.[2.] This change marks the beginning of a search for precedents which was to evolve into a distinctive Cisalpine interpretation of history.[3.] One of the immediate effects of the Blue Book was to divide the Vicars still further. Thomas Talbot decided that the Vicars' action had perhaps been "over scrupulous and nice", and regretted putting "unreasonable obstacles to a measure that is deemed greatly to conduce to the public good".[4.] Outside the extremes of either party there was a general unease at the new phenomenon of militant episcopacy. The Vicarial meeting in October had censured the Oath without so much as consulting the Committee, and had declined to give any reasons for doing so, an exercise of authority which disturbed even the orthodox, and which the Cisalpines thought monstrous.

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1. 1st Blue Book, pp.13-14.
2. ibid., pp.2, 4, 13.
3. T. A. Birrell, "Latter day Recusants" in Dublin Review, Vol. 229, p.267.
4. Dawn I, p.184.

"It is one of the most flagrant instances of clerical despotism that has been launched since the revival of Letters & Philosophy" declared Alexander Geddes, and, more moderately, James Archer complained that "The people looked up to their chief Pastors for information, ... to have it ascertained where the evil lay ... in the Oath. This was refused, authority only was to crush the whole".[1.] The president of the English College at Liège, William Strickland, wrote a series of letters to the Papal Nuncio there, pointing out that Protestants would draw their own conclusions from the Vicars' refusal to give reasons for their condemnation of an Oath tendered by Government.[2.] Even so trenchant a supporter of the Vicars as William Pilling counselled gentleness, and a "polite invitation" to the Committee to settle the matter between them; Bishop Berington denounced any exercise of episcopal authority in the matter, since the Bishops were "a party concerned" and therefore should not act as judges.[3.] This universal dislike of 'authoritarian" action was to be of the first importance in rallying support for the Committee against "bullying Bishops" and, to a great extent, clouded the real issues in the disputes which followed.

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1. SCA, A. Geddes to Bishop J. Geddes, 13th Nov., 1789.
   Upholland, Archer to Rigby, Oct. 29th, 1789
2. Archives of the S. Congregatio di Propaganda Fide
   Scritture Riferite nei Congressi, Anglia, 5: ff.97-98
   (= Propaganda, Scrit Anglia 5).
   Wm. Strickland to the Papal Nuncio at Liege, 6th Nov.1789 (French), ff.101-2.
   Same to same, Dec. 29th, 1789 (French) ff. 111-112.
   Same to same, 8th Jan. 1790 (French).
3. Clifton, Pilling to W. Sharrock, Nov.25th, 1789.

Counsels of gentleness, however, did not prevail. In the North Bishop Gibson gathered the opinions of Douay University and of the Irish and Scottish Bishops; they were unanimously against the Oath. [1.] Bishop Hay of Scotland considered that it contained "an equivalent of the Oath of Supremacy", and was "much inclined to think, that some pretended friends or false brethren ... are ... drawing us step by step" into heterodoxy. [2.] From Rome, Christopher Stonor reported that the Oath "can't fail being severely censured and condemned here", giving his own opinion that the title "Protesting Catholic Dissenters" was "shameful" and "degrades us into a Sect". [3.] One Northern cleric compared the "swearing Catholicks of England" with the appellants against the Bull Unigenitus - "what is likely to give them satisfaction if the authority of Bishops does not?" [4.] Another orthodox priest urged Walmesley to stand against "our shameful Committee" for the cause of "the Spiritual powers" for which Fisher and More had died! [5.] In this mood Walmesley published on Christmas Eve 1789 a reply to the Blue Book, hardly calculated to produce peace on earth. Denouncing the Committee's explanations of the Oath as "groundless pretence", a "far-fetched shift", a glossing over with "remote interpretation" of the errors of the Oath, he warned them against making themselves "Heads of

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1. Ushaw College Library, XVIII.D.5.19. Loose-leaf Mss. book headed "Mr. Eyre's Extracts".
   Archbishop Butler of Cashell to Bishop Gibson, Oct.28th,1789.
   Bishop John Geddes to Bishop Gibson, Aug.3rd, 1789
   Same to same, Dec. 28th, 1789.

2. ibid. J. Geddes to Gibson, Oct.20th, 1789, quoting Hay.

3. ibid. Stonor to Gibson, Oct.21st, 1789.

4. Ushaw Mss. (o.6) Oct.12th, 1789 'K K'(?) to Bishop Gibson.

5. Clifton, John Warmoll to Bishop Walmesley, 16th Dec.1789.

schism", and ended with a declaration that "I defend the Cause of Religion, which you are attempting to injure". [1.] The Committee were greatly angered by this insinuation, and others less immediately concerned felt that Walmesley had gone too far. [2.] Matters worsened with the appearance on January 15th, 1790 of a pastoral by Bishop Gibson accusing the Committee of "deluding simple minds with (an) infernal stratagem". [3.] Gibson issued the Pastoral in response to a petition from 55 Lancashire priests for some initiative by the Bishops which would satisfy Parliament of Catholic loyalty while preserving "peace and union": it served instead to increase Cisalpine resentment. "It is a shameful performance" wrote one Committee supporter, while another suggested to an ailing friend that should his illness require an emetic he had only to read the pastoral and "take my word, it will produce the effect". [4.] Support for the Committee was strongest in London and in the Middle District, particularly in the latter. Bishop Berington, in a long apologetic epistle on behalf of the

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1. Printed letter by Walmesley, dated Dec.24th, 1789.
Ushaw College Library, X.E.2.7. (n).

2. Clifton, Petre to Walmesley, Jan 6th, 1790.
Wm. Strickland to Walmesley, Jan. 7th, 1790.

3. Matthew Gibson, A Pastoral Letter ... addressed to all the Clergy ... and ... Faithful of the Northern District". (Newcastle upon Tyne, 1790) p.18.

4. Dawn, I. pp 201-2. Several Cisalpine clergy, including John Chadwick, the Vicar General, signed.
Upholland, Thomas Rigby to John Rigby, Feb. 4th, 1790.
B.A.A.C.969 A. Clough to John Kirk, Jan. 1790.

Committee addressed to the 55 Lancashire priests, observed that "You say, few indeed, in your county would take the Oath. Here in the middle district, few indeed would hesitate to take it".[1.] Thomas Talbot had omitted to publish the Vicars' condemnation of the Oath, and his coadjutor Bishop Berington was a Committee-man: moreover, Joseph Wilkes, also a Committee-man, had worked for several years on the mission in Swynerton in Staffordshire, and was well known to the clergy of that area. In January 1790, therefore, the Staffordshire clergy expressed their support of the Oath, and their solidarity with what they took to be Talbot's favourable attitude towards the Committee. At the suggestion of Talbot's Vicar General, Anthony Clough, Joseph Berington drew up and the clergy of Staffordshire signed an 'address' to Talbot rehearsing the Blue Book's arguments in favour of the Oath.[2.]

In 1789, then, ended in a continuing stalemate, the Districts and Vicars divided against each other, while mutual mistrust and resentment mounted. One Committee member in a letter to Bishop Walmesley attributed that Prelate's truculence to the fact that ".. Men are apt to look with great fortitude on ills which do not

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1. Ushaw College Library, XVIII.D.5.19. C. Berington to(John Chadwick as V.G. of) the Lancashire clergy, Feb.17th, 1790. Upholland, Thos. Rigby to Dr. J. Rigby, Feb.4th, 1790. "The conclusion, I think, will be, if the Bill pass that we of London & Midland shall take the Oath & leave the West and North to do as they will".

2. M. Rowlands, "The Staffordshire Clergy, 1688-1803". in Recusant History, 9. (1968), pp.229-231. Talbot, evidently was annoyed by the clergy's actions, "I was present... when the first copy of your printed paper, with the subscription to it, was delivered from the post to the aforesaid prelate, and heard from his own lips the most formal dissapprobation of the measure in question". J. Milner, A Serious Expostulation with the Revd. Joseph Berington..." (London 1797), pp.102-3.

affect themselves, & as many of our body are only touched by that part of the Penal code which is seldom enforced; I do not wonder at the calmness they feel at the idea of delay or even ill success in the endeavours for relief ..." He warned Walmesley that the gentry would be driven to apostacy by the Vicars' actions, [1.] while Alexander Geddes considered that the community was "on the eve of an open schism", and all from "a slavish dependence on the court of Rome". [2.]

II. Ecclesiastical Democracy Detected

The new year brought with it new disasters. On January 26th Bishop James Talbot died, leaving the London Vicariate vacant at a crucial moment. The orthodox had cause to worry, for the Committee immediately began a canvas to secure the appointment of Bishop Berington. Up till this point the orthodox had conceded that "No-one as yet, has dared to stand forth the avowed advocate of error; they contend that the Oath ... does not interfere with any ... principles of religion". [3.] Now began a series of publications which drastically altered the case. In a Letter to Samuel Horsley, Bishop of St. David's, Lord Petre denounced the 'Court of Rome' and its 'usurped privileges', spoke warmly of 'wresting' power from Rome, and denied that English Catholics were 'Papists'. [4.] Two pamphlets signed "a protesting

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1. Clifton, Sir Henry Englefield to Bishop Walmesley, Nov.23rd,1789.
2. SCA, Alexander Geddes to John Geddes, Dec.21st, 1789.
3. Clifton, W. Pilling to Bishop Sharrock, Nov.25th, 1789.
4. (Robert, Lord Petre), A Letter to the Rt. Rev. Dr. Horsley, Bishop of St. David's. (London 1790)

Catholic" took the attack on Pope and Vicars far beyond these modest limits. Both were the work of Petre's pensioner, Alexander Geddes, and both were violently anti-clerical, anti-episcopal, and anti-papal. The first, An answer to the Bishop of Comana's Pastoral, was a direct reply to Gibson's letter of January 15th, and for the most part consisted of 'smart' knock-down retorts to Gibson's main points. Geddes made much of the distinction between the true Catholic religion and the Popish religion, the latter a seditious superstition "the cause of almost all the political disturbances in Europe since the days of Gregory VII" against which the Cisalpines protest, and for which "ye Vicars apostolic appear to be contending ...". Commenting on Gibson's signing himself "by the grace of God and the apostolic See, Bishop..." Geddes lamented such a "flagrant innovation .. in the Christian Church ... derogatory from the episcopal character". It was "a badge of spiritual vassalage", which many Continental bishops had "shaken off". "The good Bishop of Pistoya and Prato has set the example ... and there is little doubt but his example will soon be followed by other good bishops". [1] Geddes' second pamphlet, A Letter to the Vicars Apostolic ... from a Catholic Layman, took up various stands already noticed in Cisalpine apologetic, and wove them into a violent attack on the status quo of the English mission. Clerical opposition to the Oath was dismissed - "Ye and your priests had little .. to hope from the new bill .. and this, possibly, makes you less solicitous about its succeeding". The Vicars' condemnation of the Oath was defined as tyranny -

1. (Alexander Geddes) An Answer to the Bishop of Comana's Pastoral Letter (London 1790)

".. we have not sworn a blind obedience to the dictates of Vicars Apostolic - nay nor to those of HIM who created them such. Our obedience as well as our belief, is a rational one .." The most alarming sections of the pamphlet, however, were those dealing with the Papacy. "Had I been the framer of (the Oath) the Papal Power, Authority and Jurisdiction should have been rejected in still stronger and more explicit terms. I shall (sic) have tied you down to swear that, the Pope has no real jurisdiction whatsoever in this realm .. No, my Lords! - The Pope, though in rank and pre-eminence the first of Bishops, has, strictly speaking, no jurisdictive power beyond his own .. domains". And looking forward to the reduction of the Papacy to a "primacy of rank, precedence and superinspection" Geddes praised the activities of the Continental anti-papalists, poking fun in the process at Indulgences, medals, fasting, "rosaries, rings and baptised Relics". [1] The two pamphlets were realized to be unrepresentative of anyone but the writer, yet they increased suspicions of the Committee's ultimate motives. The Answer betrays, wrote one critic, ".. much of what I have long suspected to be transacting in the dark .. the author .. is an abettor or agent of those who behind the Committee, perhaps unknown to them, are planning the destruction of Catholicity among us. A more frantic declamation against the Holy See has not been sent forth in these times from Vienna or Pistoria (sic). The Libel begins with schism and ends in outrage". [2]

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1. (Alexander Geddes) A Letter to the Vicars Apostolic in England from a Catholic Layman (London 1790) signed "A Protesting Catholic, but no papist".
2. Ushaw College Mss. (Ush.Mss) Rev'd. Thomas Eyre to Mr. Thomas Eyre. March 4th, 1790. W. Pilling, "A Dialogue between a Protesting Catholic Dissenter and a Catholic on the .. Oath.." (London 1790) p.ii. "The complexion of these pamphlets is a demonstration against the cause, in favour of which they are printed .. (they) .. breathe throughout insult and outrage against our worthy prelates, and the Vicar of Christ".

In this atmosphere the London clergy met to discuss the appointment of a new bishop. Talbot had left no coadjutor and there was no clear guidance as to the correct procedure. After two fruitless meetings an election was decided upon. Accordingly, on February 18th, after a solemn requiem for the late Bishop, the votes of the secular clergy were collected, and Bishop Berington received thirty-nine of the sixty votes cast. [1.] The regulars and ex-Jesuits were excluded from the voting, but Berington was popular, and an open letter complaining of their exclusion but ratifying the Seculars' choice was despatched to the Bishop by many of the regulars. [2.] The ex-Jesuits, too, were "warm for Bp. Berington", who had supported their cause in the disputes over temporalities in the North in 1787. [3.] The voice of the laity was also heard, for a letter "very numerously and respectably signed by the Nob(ility) & Gent(ry) to recommend him" was read to the meeting of February 18th. Immediately afterwards a similar letter was dispatched by the Committee to Propaganda, followed by one from the Catholic Peers of England. For a time it seemed that Bishop Berington, and the Cisalpine cause, would carry the day, and the orthodox noted with gloom that "the number of those who defend the Oath & Com(mittee) proceedings is daily increasing". [4.] However, Berington's support for the Oath weighed against him, both at Rome and among the orthodox element in England, and Bishop Walmesley sent his own

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1. Ward Dawn I, pp.218ff. Ward dates the first meeting as Thursday Feb.18th. But this was in fact the third clergy meeting - cf. Henry Clifford Reflections on the Appointment of a Catholic Bishop to the London District (London 1791) pp.43ff.
2. Clifford, op.cit., pp.60ff.
3. Ush.Mss. o.9. Revd. Thomas Eyre to Mr. Thomas Eyre, March 4th,1790
4. Upholland, Thos. Rigby to Dr. John Rigby, Feb.22nd, 1790.
   Henry Rutter to Robert Bannister, Feb.19th,1790
   Ward, Dawn, I. p.224

'Terna' to Rome, excluding Berington. In any case, the Cisalpine's "well acquainted with the ticklishmess of Rome in regard of her pretensicns" were apprehensive that the mode of selecting the Bishop might jeapoardize his chances. "That court", wrote Lord Petre, "jealous of their remaining power, apprehends this to be a kind of election of a bishop ... a mode not applicable to the appointing of an Apostolic Vicar who is absolute servant of the Pope..." [1]. The London clergy, conscious perhaps of the novelty of their proceedings, sent three names to Rome, to avoid the appearance of restricting Propaganda's choice. Tension began to mount, and Petre wrote to Walmesley, demanding that he should recommend Berington to the London district. "The minds of men are not in these times disposed to submit to any unnecessary punctillios of the Court of Rome ..." [2]. Meanwhile the Oath question receded into the background, as political events made it prudent to defer the Bill till the next year. [3]. All attention fixed on the vacant Vicariate.

Then on May 19th, Matthew Gibson died, leaving only Walmesley to hold the pass, for Thomas Talbot had shown signs of favouring the Committee, and on May 6th, 1790 was elected into it to replace his brother James. [4]. Gibson had left directions

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1. Clifford, op.cit., p.57
   Throck.Mss. Petre to Throckmorton, April 30th, 1790

2. Clifton, Petre to Walmesley, May 15th, 1790
   (and Dawn I, pp.224-5)

3. Dawn I, pp.215ff.

4. Rowlands, Recusant History, 9. p.231

that his recommendation for a successor should be forwarded to Rome by the Talbot brothers: Thomas Talbot however, instead of submitting a ' terna' to Rome, asked the clergy of the Northern district to collect votes, on the results of which voting his recommendation would depend.[1.] His suggestion was backed up by the appearance of an anonymous Letter to the Catholic Clergy of England on the appointment of Bishops.[2.] Signed "a Layman", it was in fact by John Throckmorton, and it gave further cause for alarm. Throckmorton argued that the only "primitive"method of appointing bishops was by canonical election by the clergy, with the consent of the laity; he claimed that confirmation of the election by the Pope, and much less actual nomination, were unnecessary, and contrary to the canons of the Church. "However high his rank and station in the Church" the appointment of bishops was no part of the "spiritual commission" of the "first Bishop in the Church". He attacked the institution of Apostolic Vicars - "Pastors without a flock .. Bishops without the power of the keys", 'persons' who now "by a lamentable abuse, preside over you, in virtue of an authority delegated to them by a foreign Prelate, who has no pretensions to exercise such an act of power". This foreign dependence would arouse the suspicions of Protestants, and the clergy of the districts which still had Vicars should "regularize" them by electing them Bishops-in-ordinary. "They are now aliens, you will make them Englishmen;

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1. Upholland, Thomas Eyre to John Rigby, August 12th, 1790

2. (John Throckmorton) A Letter addressed to the Catholic Clergy of England on the appointment of Bishops, by a Layman. (n.p.n.d. - 1790) (= Throckmorton I).

they are dependent, you will make them free; they are foreign emissaries, you will transform them into English Bishops; they must rejoice in the change". Throckmorton indeed castigated the London clergy for failing to conduct a proper election but having "contented yourselves with recommending the object of your choice, accompanied by the names of two others, to the nomination of a foreign Prelate". In doing so they had "sacrificed the rights of the people" to the "pretensions of the Court of Rome". He urged them, and the Northern clergy, to "act as the Clergy of Carthage and of Alexandria would have done in similar circumstances", and elect their own bishops, a measure which would be supported "by the whole body of the Laity". Should the remaining Vicars refuse to consecrate the elect, they should apply to the "Bishops of a neighbouring Province", namely France, where the church was, even as Throckmorton wrote, rapidly advancing towards schism. [1] Finally, Throckmorton raised the question of the Pontifical Oath taken by bishops at their consecration. This Oath of obedience and loyalty to the Pope contained phrases which many Protestant polemicists had interpreted as prejudicial to the security of states which tolerated Catholics, and others, (such as the jurors promise that "pro posse persequar, et impugnabo" all heretics and schismatics,) which seemed to confirm the persecuting and bloodthirsty nature of Catholicism. As early as February 1787 the Committee had interested itself in this Oath and had determined to publish an account of the Papal dispensation from taking it granted to the Archbishop elect

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1. ibid., pp.9-14. John McManners The French Revolution and the Church. (London 1969-), pp.24ff.

of Mohilow appointed by Catherine the Great.[1] With typical Cisalpine hyper-sensitivity to any hint of Roman Catholic disloyalty Throckmorton now denounced this Oath as "perfectly incompatible with the duty which Bishops owe to the Church, and to the allegiance which they owe to the government of their country", and expressed the hope that no English Bishop could take such a servile and unchristian oath in future.[2]

The proposals for church reform made in the Layman's Letter were hardly likely to arouse widespread support, as even the most dedicated Cisalpines must have suspected. Nevertheless, both orthodox and Cisalpines believed that in London and the Midlands something might be done. Joseph Wilkes was convinced that none of the clergy of the Western District had "spirit enough" to act as the Letter had suggested; he had higher hopes of the Middle District - "I could wish you to write to the Beringtons upon this subject", he advised Throckmorton. "It might not ... be difficult to prevail on the Clergy and those Gentlemen who maintain congregations, to elect their present

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1. For a summary of the late 18th C. debate about this Oath, see The Analytical Review or History of Literature Domestic and Foreign, V. (Sept.-Dec.1789) pp.58-61, - a review of William Hale's A Survey of the State of the Church of Rome with additional observations on the Doctrine of the Pope's Supremacy. (London 1789) This uses part of the controversy to which Hawkins, Wharton, Berington and Pilling had contributed. The reviewer commented that suspicions of Catholic allegiance were "principaly grounded on the Oath in the Roman Pontifical. The Roman Catholics would, therefore, do well to give up this point" and in language clearly paraphrasing Berington's Reflections, wrote of the "sapping" of Roman bigotry by "rational" Catholics, and the breaking of "the wall of separation". Alexander Geddes was a regular contributor to the Analytical.
B.M. Add.Mss.7961. Minute book of the Catholic Committee, ff.72ff, meeting of 21st Feb.1787 (CCMB)
Throck Mss. Wilkes to Throckmorton, Nov.9th, 1788

2. Throckmorton I, p.20.

worthy Prelate as their real Bishope, and make a .. regulation, that no Bishop shall for the future apply to Rome for his confirmation, or disgrace himself and the English Catholics by taking an oath of fealty to a foreign power". [1.]

Orthodox fears followed hard on Cisalpine expectations, and to counteract the 'poison' of Throckmorton's pamphlet, "in the short space of a month or two, four several confutations of the Layman's address were published by different clergymen". [2.] Indeed, the pamphlet was the signal for a general "crash of sentences, ... roar of pamphlets and .. war of words", [3.] in which both the Cisalpine and Orthodox positions were fully formulated. The Cisalpine works had in common a hostile attitude to the papacy; in general their plan of attack followed clsely the lines of Throckmorton's pamphlet, with the addition of another whipping-boy - the Isidorian Decretals. These forged Decretals, "the groundwork of the Court of Rome", had "reversed the fair

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1. Throck.Mss. Wilkes to Throckmorton, June 21st, 1790.

2. J. Milner, Ecclesiastical Democracy Detected; being a Review of the Controversy between the Laymen and the Clergymen concerning the Appointment of Bishop .. (London 1793), p.6.
The four several confutations were:
   J. Milner — The Clergyman's answer to the Layman's Letter (London 1790)
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3. C. Plowden, Answer. p.6.

worthy Prelate as their real Bishope, and make a .. regulation, that no Bishop shall for the future apply to Rome for his confirmation, or disgrace himself and the English Catholics by taking an oath of fealty to a foreign power". [1.]

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order and established hierarchy of the Church, disfigured the face of religion, and gave rise to all the heresies and schisms which have since divided the inheritance of Christ."[1.] As the controversy progressed a definitely Cisalpine interpretation of Catholic history in England since the Reformation emerged; this stressed the loyalty of a core of Catholics who had continually "protested" against Ultramontane doctrines, and had been bullied and betrayed by a callous and self-seeking papacy, the "court of Rome" and its "purple cardinals".[2.] The agents of this court were Jesuits and other Regulars, their favourite weapons 'sophism' and 'scholastic philosophy'.[3.] The subjection of the English Church was symbolised and continued by the Vicars Apostolic, constantly at the beck and call of "a foreign power", being mere Papal delegates. They were, wrote Geddes, mere "creatures and emissaries";[4.] they are, echoed Henry Clifford "a .. species of non-descripts, ... a kind of ecclesiastical hemaphrodite":[5.] let us make them our bishops, urged John Throckmorton.[6.]

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1. Clifford, op.cit. p.8.
J. Throckmorton A Second Letter addressed to the Catholic Clergy of England on the appointment of Bishops (London 1791) p.ii. (= Throckmorton II).
T. Potts, An Inquiry into the moral and political tendency of the religion called Roman Catholic. (London 1790) p.114.

2. J. Throckmorton, ibid, p.69, 71, 105 xxx.

3. Clifford, op.cit. p.8

4. Analytical Review, vol.10, p.500

5. Clifford, op.cit. p.13.

6. Throckmorton I, p.13.

The fountains from which the Cisalpine writers drew their ideas were many and various. The whole of Europe was astir with Josephinist and Jansenist theories of church government. Joseph Wilkes supplied Throckmorton with much of the material for his pamphlets, which represent the most consistent and weighty Cisalpine contribution to the controversy; and Wilkes had certainly read, and in part approved, the major Josephinist writings, such as Febronius' De Statu Ecclesiae and Eybel's Waes is der Pabst? John Kirk was in direct touch with the reforms at Pistoia through the letters of his friend and former teacher, Professor Bottieri of Pisa, one of the synod 'divines'.[1] Though he avoided direct citation of these writers, Throckmorton quoted Van Espen freely, and many of the positions and emphases adopted by the Cisalpines were clearly drawn from Febronius or kindred sources. The stress on Pseudo-Isidore, the denial of Papal monarchy, and the application of phrases such as "limited superintendence" to the papal office, all correspond to emphases found in De Statu Ecclesiae and the proceedings of the synod of Pistoia.[2]

There were, however, more domestic sources. The history of Elizabethan Appelants, of the defenders of James I's Oath of Allegiance, and of the Irish Remonstrance and its defender Friar Peter Walsh, were heavily drawn upon by Throckmorton for precedent

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1. Throck.Mss. Wilkes to Throckmorton, Nov.9th, 1788
B.A.A., c.905, C. Stonor to Kirk. Kirk had also studied under Pier Foggini, a supporter of Scipio Ricci.
Kirk, Biographies, p.145.

2. On Febronianism and Josephinism in general, L. Pastor, The History of the Popes, Vol.xxxvi (London 1950) pp.236-293. xxxix (London 1952) pp.112-159, 421-479, xl (London 1953) pp.1-86.
Heyer, op.cit. pp.25-31. E. Winter Der Josefinismus (2nd Ed. Berlin, 1962)
Throckmorton II, pp.56,112. Throckmorton III, p.26.
Clifford, op.cit.p.27

and arguments, as were the writings of those seventeenth century forerunners of the Cisalpines, Blackloe's Cabal. [1.] This debt to the "Secular Tradition" was one of Cisalpinism's strengths, bringing into play as it did ancient loyalties and prejudices. It also illustrates the difficulty of attributing Cisalpine ideas to clearly identifiable sources. Anti-papalism, hatred of the Jesuits and the orders, a readiness to conciliate the State, were all characteristic of Josephinist writings; they were equally characteristic of the 'Gallican' participants in the feuds of seventeenth century English Catholicism. [2.]

Finally, English Catholics, educated in France, naturally tended to use Gallican theological works, [3.] and in citing such writers as Fleury, De Marca, and Hooke, the Cisalpines were true to the mainstream of English Catholic thought; once again, that fact was one of their strengths. [4.]

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1. Throckmorton, II. pp.xcix ff.
III, pp.96 ff, 133 ff, 148 ff.
On Walsh, see J. Brennan, "A Gallican Interlude in Ireland: The Irish Remonstrance of 1661" in Irish Theological Quarterly 24 (1957) pp.219-237, 283-309.

2. Above, Chapter I, pp.
Lunn, Recusant History 10, pp.146 ff.
T. H. Clancy "English Catholics and the Papal Deposing Power". Recusant History 6, pp. 114 f, 205 f: 7 pp 2 f.

3. Aveling, Downside Review, lxxix pp.135-152.

4. cf. the anonymous Apology for the Catholics of Great Britain and Ireland (London 1768) for a theory of Papal/conciliar infallibility drawn directly (though not avowedly) from De Marca.

The main plank of the orthodox platform was conservatism. Cisalpine writers had identified themselves with the forces of Enlightenment and reform, with continental democratisation of churches, with the French Revolution, and with the Rational Dissenters at home. Throckmorton had written favourably of the Church 'reforms' proceeding in France under the National assembly, of the church of Utrecht, and of the Josephinist reforms in Austria.[1.] Moreover, Cisalpines had delivered themselves of maxims which in the light of events in France could be understood as seditious: Thomas Pott's opinion that "all power originates from the people" and might be revoked by them, and Throckmorton's claim that the people might abolish any law from which "considerable inconveniences are felt" received a sinister appearance from known Cisalpine revolutionary sympathies.[2.] In the dedication of his History of Henry II, published in April 1790, Joseph Berington welcomed the "progress of events" in France which would "secure the rights of men, break the arm of despotism, and give liberty to millions", and in the same year Alexander Geddes published the first of a series of congratulatory odes dedicated to the Revolutionary Committee.[3.] The orthodox made much of such "Gallic notions". John Milner, the missioner at Winchester, and the Vicars' leading pamphleteer, spoke of the "unexampled frenzy for religious and political revolutions" of which characterized the times, and the spread of the "irreligious

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1. Throckmorton II, pp.88, 85, 112, lxxxix.

2. Potts, op.cit. p.134. Sir John was a prominent member of the 'Friends of the People'.

3. J. Berington, The History of the Reign of Henry the Second, (Birmingham 1790) p.iii.
A. Geddes, Carmen Saeculare, pro Gallica gente, tyrannidi aristocraticae erepta, a secular ode on the French Revolution ... (London 1790)

and democratic contagion to our little fold".[1.] Against the Cisalpines' "Ecclesiastical Democracy" the orthodox set the claim that Christ had established the church as a "monarchy mixed with aristocracy" without a "particle of democracy or republicanism in its composition..."[2.] Those who began by 'reforming' the Church, it was argued, and by destroying all social order: "The same detested maxim which is seditious in the state, is schismatical in the Church".[3.] The point weighed heavily with Catholic squire and priest, who were as conservative as the next man. In any case, the Cisalpine search for an 'apostolic succession' of "Protesting Catholics" in their history led them to disparage those who had died rather than taken the oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy, which the Cisalpines now declared perfectly acceptable - "they were martyrs" wrote Throckmorton "to the deposing power, not to their religion".[4.] So radical a break with the sympathies of the average Catholic was unlikely to aid their cause.

In the midst of this pamphlet war both sides continued to promote their candidates for the vacant Vicariates. In the North, John Chadwick, the Vicar General and a Cisalpine, circulated a letter to the clergy of Lancashire urging them to send their votes for the new Vicar to Bishop Talbot. The orthodox watched with growing apprehension. "Who will now come forward .. to oppose himself as a wall for the house of God, against the present set of innovators?

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1. J. Milner, The Divine Right of Episcopacy .. in answer to the Layman's Second Letter ... (London 1791), p.3.

2. ibid., p.17-18

3. C. Plowden, Answer, pp.73-4.

4. Throckmorton III, p.103 n.

The sole management of affairs will .. be comitted to Mr. Thos Talbot or rather to his coadjutor C. Ber(ington) and what can be expected from such guides?" [1.] The Lancashire Cisalpines were led by Chadwick, John Rigby and William Dunn - all 'Paris Doctors' and therefore suspected by the orthodox of "Gallic notions". Chadwick and Rigby began to meet secretly to plan the 'election', and the orthodox feared that "many artful snares' would be laid to elect one who would be "very complying with the wishes and designs of Com(mittee) men& their abettors". [2.] A meeting in July compiled a 'terna' consisting of John Douglass, John Rigby and Henry Dernet, but as the collection of the postal votes continued Cisalpine supporters, among the laity in the North were "warm in favour of D(octor) R(igby)", and it became increasingly likely that he would be the next Bishop of the Northern District. [3.] To prevent appointment of this "stickler for the Oath in its most objectionable form" the orthodox dispatched a volley of memorials to Rome, cataloguing Rigby's iniquities, which varied from being a "spectator and applauder of lude theatricals", to having studied at Paris and consequently become a supporter of "Gallican ideas about independent jurisdiction", and patronising "those modern opinions which vilify and minimise the authority of the Pontifs" and a supporter of the Oath condemned by the Vicars. [4.] Robert Bannister in his memorial

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1. Upholland Henry Rutter to Robert Bannister, May 24th,1790
2. Upholland, Bannister to Rutter, June 7th, 1790
3. J. Derek Holmes The Weldbank Plot and the Raven Head Election in North West Catholic History, 11/2. pp.51-53.
   U.P.A. c.8. J. Lonsdale to Chadwick, July 12th, 1790
   U.P.A. c.9. J. Lonsdale to Chadwick, July 23rd, 1790
   U.P.A. c.10 P. Browne to John Chadwick, August 27th,1790.
4. Propaganda. Scrit Anglia.5.pp.136. Bishop Walmesley to Cardinal Antonelli, August 26th, 1790. f 138.
   John Barrow to Antonelli, August 31st 1790 (both Latin)
   Upholland, Bannister to Rutter, August 5th 1790 quoting his memorial to Antonelli.

also lodged a formal complaint against "the Schismatt(ical) proceedings amongst our laymen, noble and gentle, & too many of the Br(ethre)n their obsequious dependents", and the "dangerous & uncanonical novelty" introduced under the direction and countenance of B(ishop) T(albo)t, who, if we can believe his Co-adj(uto)r, is no enemy to the new formula, & is connected with his Br(ethre)n oathites".[1.]

In the London District tension mounted. The clergy vote and lay memorial had been counterbalanced at Rome by orthodox warnings that Bishop Berington was a supporter of the Committee and a man of doubtful orthodoxy.[2.] Growing Cisalpine fears that Berington might after all be set aside were exaserbated by the flow of orthodox pamphlets "(I)t is a disgrace to our Body" complained Lord Petre, "to have reared in our houses of Education men whose scholastic sophistry misleads the Ignorant, alarms the weak & tender consciences, and shakes the principles of common honesty and plain dealing ... I shall write a line to Mr. Wilkes to encourage him to defend us against these emissaries from the Pope, I think they may justly be called popish emissaries, endeavouring to mislead our people".[3.]

Early in September news reached London that William Gibson, the universally unpopular President of Douay, was to succeed his brother in the Northern District. Gibson had few friends, orthodox

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1. Upholland, Bannister to Rutter, August 5th, 1790.

2. Propaganda Scrit.Anglia 5. f.138, J. Barrow to Cardinal Antonelli, August 31st, 1790.
Dawn, I. pp.223-4. Among the 'black marks' against Bp. Berington was his residence with his cousin Joseph, "whose scandalous writings show him to be an innovator.."
Upholland, H. Rutter to R. Bannister, May 24th, 1790.

3. Throck.Mss. Petre to Throckmorton, August 1st, 1790.

or Cisalpine; only a month before, a public meeting of the Northern clergy had censured his mismanagement of Douay College affairs, and demanded his resignation. Nevertheless, the appointment was especially galling to the Cisalpines, for the clergy choice, John Rigby, had been ignored, and Gibson was a firm opponent of the Committee and its measures.[1] "All (the committee-men's) plans must now fall to the ground" rejoiced one Northern missioner, and the Cisalpines too, feared the worst. "When consecrated" wrote Charles Butler, "he and Mr. Walmesley are to appoint .. some person .. probably Mr. Barnard to be the Bishop of London: - and then, ye are all to be annihilated".[2] Resistance seemed the only plan, and Butler wondered whether the "Gentlemen of the North" might be "brought to recalcitrate", Bishop Talbot induced to oppose "this abominable intruder", or the Gentry to bring pressure by withholding their financial support for their Missions, "till the Flock have a Pastor of their own choice". Worse followed with the news that Bishop Berington was to be set aside in favour of the London clergy's second choice, John Douglass. "Low arts" and "hellish schemes" had gained the day, and a "club of defamation" had persuaded Rome that Bishop Berington was a man "relaxed as to discipline, and also as to morals".[3] Joseph Wilkes urged action. "If we were unanimous, this last act of tyranny would give us a proper occasion to place our church on the primitive footing". The clergy

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1. North West Catholic History, II/2, p.53.

2. Upholland, Rutter to Bannister n.d., but endorsed "about the end of Septr 1790" by Bannister.

3. Throck.Mss. Charles Butler to John Throckmorton, Sept.13th, 1790.
Clifford, op.cit. pp.62-3.

and laity should "proceed immediately to an election, send a memorial to the Pope specifying their reasons for returning to the ancient discipline, and the Bishop elect send at the same time a profession of his faith and a solemn declaration of his adhering to the center of Catholic Communion". Meanwhile application should be made "to the nearest Metropolitan in France, soliciting him to receive the communicating letter of our Church, and to appoint a time for ordaining the Bishop elect". This plan, he added, "would give us freedom, but we have not energy and firmness to execute it". [1.] The anger of many of the Northern clergy at the appointment of Gibson and the disregard of the clergy vote gave the Cisalpines hope that Gibson might be rejected. Sir John Lawson ordered William Dunn to take "at his cost and charge post horses, post chaises, and ride God knows whither" to prevent the appointment. [2.] Dunn and Chadwick travelled to London in October, "to try to out" Gibson . [3.] They found the London District in turmoil. The "late tyranny" of Propaganda had provided fuel for the Cisalpines' already growing anti-Romanism. "..We shall never do well, till we have exhibited the shameful history of Bellarminism and the oppressive usage of the Roman Congregation in this country.." Wilkes told Throckmorton. "The veil will I hope be soon lifted up.." [4.]

Their exasperation reached its peak on September 29th in a confrontation between Lord Petre and James Barnard, acting superior

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1. Throck. Mss. Joseph Wilkes to John Throckmorton, Sept.27th,1790.
2. Upholland, Bannister to Rutter, Sept.8th, 1790.
3. Upholland, Bannister to Rutter, 12th Feb.1791.
4. Throck.Mss. Wilkes to Throckmorton, Oct. 11th, 1790.

of the London District. Petre summoned Barnard to his residence and asked him to call a clergy meeting to protest to Rome against the appointment of any bishop "but such as had been recommended as agreeable to the Catholicks here..." - "by which words" commented Barnard "I understood he meant the Committee's recommendation". Petre told Barnard that if Douglass were appointed, no-one would obey him, and threatened that the Ambassadors would withdraw their Chapels from the Vicars' control and place them under "Bishops of their respective Countries" - to which Barnard retorted that this would be "introducing and acknowledging the jurisdiction of Foreign Prelates contrary to the Committee's Oath". Exasperated, Petre threatened the withdrawal of funds from the mission by the Gentry, (resorting if necessary to the Attorney General), praised the French 'Constitutional' bishops and declared that "it was foolish for the Pope to think that he had a right of appointing Bishops for this country .. he had no jurisdiction in England". None of this was calculated to impress Barnard, who declared himself ready to receive whoever Rome sent. The meeting ended so, leaving Barnard apprehensive of "a schism formed & a Persecution raised by our false brethren", and Lord Petre unsatisfied and angry. "I never had a visit in my life that tryed my patience so much as this visit of the man of God".[1.]

The Committee nevertheless decided to organise their own protest to Rome; Thomas Hussey, chaplain at the Spanish Embassy and an experienced diplomat, was deputed to take a 'remonstrance' to Rome, to forward Berington's appointment and prevent Gibson's, and to procure "a more Regular choice of the English Catholic Prelacy in future".[2.] Hussey himself wrote "a very spirited letter"

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1. Throck.Mss. Petre to Throckmorton, 29th Sept. 1790.
   Clifton, Barnard to Walmesley, Oct. 5th, 1790.
2. Dawn, I. p.231.
   U.P.A. c.12. C. Butler to Northern Clergy, Oct.14th, 1790

to Cardinal Antonelli, warning him of the danger of schism and asking him to suspend all further action till he should arrive.[1.] Hussey's brief, drawn up by Charles Butler, was equally 'spirited', for in addition to a request that Rome should revoke the appointment of Gibson and Douglass it contained a threat to close down the Gentry chapels and cut off financial aid to the mission, and claimed an "absolute right" for the clergy to choose their bishops.[2.] In late October, however, the London clergy informed Petre that they felt that they could not consistently petition Rome against Douglass' appointment, as he had been the second name on their 'terna'; Hussey's mission, therefore, "was suspended if not given up". Petre thought this mere "pussilanimity", and was "very much out of humour". The arrival of Chadwick and Dunn at this point, however, gave new impetus to the Cisalpine rebellion ".. upon our laying open to them the Case of the N(orthern) District ... it was unanimously resolved that Mr. Hussey's journey to Rome was absolutely necessary, & that he should set off immediately .." The Remonstrance to be presented by Hussey was to be signed by the Committee for the English Catholics and by Chadwick for the Northern clergy as there was no time to hold a general meeting. An immense bustle of Cisalpines to organise support ensued, for it was considered essential to present the Remonstrance before formal notification of the appointments were made to the clergy, after which Rome would be unlikely to relent.[3.] The effervescence precipitated

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1. Upholland, William Dunn to John Rigby, Nov (8?) 1790
   Propaganda Scrit Anglia 5 f,149 Thos.Hussey to Cardinal Antonelli 15th Oct. 1790

2. J. Milner, Supplementary Memoirs, p.71

3. Upholland, William Dunn to John Rigby, Nov(8?), 1790.

by the arrival of Dunn and Chadwick quickly abated. Bishop Berington sensibly accepted Douglass' appointment, and on November 4th published a letter urging the London District to receive and obey Rome's choice. On the same day he wrote to Propaganda, praising the appointment of Douglass.[1.] The opposition movement collapsed. The Northern delegates returned home crestfallen, and the orthodox were jubilant "- their journey & labour proved abortive, altho' Dunn wore out 4 pairs of breeches in his arduous perambulations thro' the town to promote the good design".[2.]

The Committee still planned to send Hussey to "pave the way for having bishops in ordinary elected by their clergy", but even this was thwarted when the Spanish Ambassador refused to release him for the mission.[3.] In December the Cisalpine lawyer Henry Clifford published a pamphlet urging resistence by the laity, and rejecting Douglass' authority, but his action was "universally cried down" even by "his warmest friends" and came to nothing.[4.]

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1. Dawn, I p.232-3.
Propaganda Scrit. Anglia 5 f. 153. Bp. Berington to Propaganda, Nov.4th 1790.

2. Upholland, Bannister to Rutter, Feb.12th, 1791.
Dunn, according to an acquaintance, was "a monster of fat, a disgusting sight" which explains the 'breeches' jibe.
(AAW. Paris I 'W.B.' to John Rigby, Dec.19th, 1783.

3. C. Butler, Historical Memoirs IV, pp.40-43.

4. Clifford, op.cit: (though the title page is dated 1791, the pamphlet is signed by Clifford on Dec.4th, 1790, and there are references to the work in various letters written at the end of 1790)
Leeds, W. Pilling to W. Gibson, Dec.18th, 1790.

On December 5th, Gibson was consecrated by Walmesley, and two weeks later himself consecrated Douglass. The ceremonies took place in the orthodox Western District at Lulworth, where the Vicars took the opportunity to "crowd around the ark" and decide on the best means of dealing with the crisis facing the Catholic community. The consecration sermons by Milner and Plowden bespeak the sense of beleagurement of the Vicars: Milner took as his text "Thou art Peter and upon this Rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it"; Plowden's choice was "Obey your prelates and be subject to them".[1.] Both discourses were published, and in the preface to his Milner spoke at length of the "epidemical phrenzy .. for establishing certain chimerical rights of man in a business in which man has no right at all ... I mean the principle of vesting in the people at large the authority of appointing their own prelates". He quoted in support Burke's condemnation of the French clerical elections as "the last corruption of the Church, and the utter ruin of the clerical character". The sermon itself dwelt on the "leaven of irreligion and anarchy .. fermenting among us", the "frightful crisis" which might end in a "fatal schism", and solemnly warned Catholics that should the community become a "divided people, no longer united in ecclesiastical government or communion", the true church would subsist only among those found "adhering to the apostolic Rock and the unmovable chair of Peter founded upon it".[2.]

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1. J. Milner, A Discourse delivered at the Consecration of the Rt. Rev. William Gibson .. on Sunday 5th of December 1790 (London 1791).
C. Plowden, A Discourse ... at the Consecration of the Rt. Rev. John Douglass ... on Sunday 19th December 1790 (London 1791)

2. Milner, ibid., pp.ix-xxii, xv-xvi, 10-11.

The orthodox indeed saw the happenings of the past year in terms of a struggle for control of the Church. In the light of events in France, Austria, and Tuscany, they cared not a fig for Throckmorton's assurance that he had no other object in view "than the desire of seeing our religion practised in its primitive purity.." [1.] The sort of reformation envisaged by the Cisalpines they condemned as rebellious folly at best, and a deliberate attempt to destroy Christianity itself at worst. But beneath the rhetoric of the pamphleteers, both sides were aware of harder realities. The leading Cisalpines were not Churchmen, but Whig grandees; Lord Petre with his flowered waistcoats and Sir Henry Englefield with his chinnery vases were unlikely to be taken seriously as ecclesiastical reformers. The reform of the ecclesiastical structures of English Roman Catholicism was a means to an end, the attainment of the rightful status and privileges of English Gentlemen. As Catholic gentry had in the past restrained the zeal of proselytizing priests in order to retain the good opinion of officers of the Establishment; so now the Cisalpines desired to set their religious house in order on the best modern lines, and to do so as publicly as possible. For the sake of emancipation, it was thought, the clerical subalterns must be called to order, and to stretch a point or two should that prove necessary. This compliance the Cisalpines felt was their due, and much of their anger was mingled with surprise at being resisted at all. So Hussey's final 'brief' for his Rome mission expressed the Gentry's '<u>astonishment</u>' at the lack of regard paid to their wishes; and the threat to withdraw financial aid unless those wishes were complied with was couched in terms of the 'recovery' of the gentry's 'rights'.[2.]

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1. <u>Throckmorton I</u>, p.21.
2. Butler, <u>Historical Memoirs</u> IV, pp.41-43.

Joseph Wilkes complained of the offence the proceedings of Rome must cause to the gentry "who are, and always have been the protectors of the Catholic Religion" and the damage done to Catholicism "by disgusting those, whom they ought to oblige".[1.]

That Rome would "oblige" the Cisalpines by reforming the Mission on lines which would be approved of by English Protestant radicals and French schismatics seems now an absurd hope. It does, however, highlight the fact that the dispute over the election of Bishops was ultimately motivated not by any zeal for 'Primitive' discipline, but by a desire to see the English Church cleared of accusations of foreign domination. If English Catholics could be seen to be British, root and branch, neither priest nor pope ridden, emancipation would come that much sooner. The penal status quo of a church ruled by English gentry, and not any dream of a golden age of apostolic simplicity was the real force behind the Cisalpine appeal to antiquity. Of this the orthodox were well aware; John Milner, as always, put the position rather more brutally: "After all the fine things that have been said about the liberty of election, the real question at present is, whether the nomination of our Pastors shall rest with Lord Petre or the successors of St. Peter".[2.]

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1. Throck. Mss., Wilkes to Throckmorton, Sept.27th, 1790.

2. Fann Street, Milner to C. Plowden, 8th July, 1790
And cf. Clifton, J. Barnard to Walmesley, Nov.2nd, 1790, declaring that the Cisalpines are endeavouring "to get all the power into their own hands".

The Second Catholic Relief Act

In the new year the Vicars set about restoring order. The last months of 1790 had seen a revival of interest in the Oath, as the next session of Parliament drew near. Gibson and Douglass therefore hastened to London, where Douglass at once set about the task of consolidating the Vicars' position. He wrote to Talbot in the Midlands, appealing to him to act in concert with the other Bishops to procure a peaceful settlement, and in a letter to Lord Petre he complained of the Committee's disregard for Rome's known disppproval of the Oath, and the steps they had taken towards a new Relief Bill without consulting the Vicars.[1.] Petre swept aside all Douglass' complaints, maintaining that the Vicars were uninvolved, since the oath, if opened "with the right key", was clearly a mere civil declaration. As for consulting Rome on the matter - "You cannot conceive it necessary to have the Pope's consent to take an Oath renouncing his power over temporalities .. that court has never given up their claims .. nor never will".[2.] Abandoning further attempts at conciliation, the three Vicars published an Encyclical reiterating the original condemnation of the Oath, declaring the alterations made as a consequence of the first Encyclical "of no moment", denying the Committee's right to decide on the lawfulness of any Oath containing doctrinal matter, and urging the opposition to the Committee measures by Catholics of their districts.[3.] Thomas Talbot declined to sign the Encyclical

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1. A.A.W. 43/2 3 draft letters, Douglass to Mr. Kitchen, Bishop Talbot, Lord Petre, Jan 5th, 1791.

2. A.A.W. 43/4 5, Petre to Douglass, Jan 7th, 1791.

3. Dawn, I pp.242-3.

on the grounds that he had not seen the revised Oath and so could not pronounce on its legality, and that in any case Catholics must be content to accept relief on the terms Government made. His chief object in refusing to sign,however, was to avoid further acrimony and division, and he urged the other Vicars to propose a "conciliatory scheme".[1.]

At the Committee's request, Gibson, Douglass, and James Barnard attended at Butler's chambers on February 8th. The discussion which ensued became increasingly acrimonious, with both sides refusing to budge from their positions; the Committee insisting that what was involved was a civil declaration, the Bishops maintaining that the real issue was Episcopal authority. Gibson rejected the Committee's request that he should give reasons for his disapproval of the Oath, declaring that "when reasons are insisted upon, (the) People become judges of the point in debate".[2.] He demanded their submission to the Encyclical, and the Committee retaliated with a solemn protest against the Vicars' actions, which were "not grounded in equity"; the meeting broke up. On February 17th the Committee published a second Blue Book, containing a manifesto, embodying the by now familiar Cisalpine interpretation of Catholic history as a story of papal tyranny and usurpations, a defence of their own actions and a denunciation of the Vicars' tyranny. It ended with a solemn Appeal "against the imprudent, arbitary and unjust" Encyclical of the Vicars, addressed "to all the Catholic Churches in the Universe, and especially the first of Catholic Churches, the apostolic see, rightly informed".[3]

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1. ibid., p.244.
2. C.C.M.B., f.163
3. Second Blue Book, p.31.

Orthodox reaction to the "Protest and Appeal" was, understandably, violent. Bishop Walmesley thought it contained "all the sulphur of Hell", and retaliated by suspending Joseph Wilkes from his priestly functions.[1.] Only a week before, the Times had declared that "twould not surprise us, if a schism should take place among the Roman Catholics.. The person recommended by Lord Petre and his party to the court of Rome to be .. titular Bishop of London, has been set aside .. and another appointed who is ... unfavourable to any kind of Innovation on the old Catholic Infallibility".[2.] The orthodox took the Blue Book as evidence that such a schism was indeed imminent - it was a "clear declaration of schism, exactly copied .. from what the Jansenists have done in France and are now doing at Pistoia".[3.] In the Northern district Gibson was being urged to demand from all his clergy an "unfeigned acquiescence and submission" to the Encyclical, and a 'Protest' against the Committee's measures was circulated in many chapels.[4.]

On the other hand, the Vicars' actions provoked equally violent reaction from Committee supporters, particularly among the laity. Thomas Selby, a merchant at Chesters in Northumberland

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1. Throck.Mss, Wilkes to Throckmorton, Sept. 9th, 1791. Dawn, I. p.258

2. Clifton, M. Pembridge to Bp. Walmesley, Feb.16th, 1791, quoting The Times of Feb. 11th.

3. Leeds, C. Plowden to Bp. W. Gibson, 16th Feb. 1791

4. Upholland, Bannister to Rutter, 12th Feb, 1791
Rutter to Bannister, 12th April, 1791.

reported the circulation of the orthodox protest and declared that "I would sooner have my hand cut off than sign such a paper". Selby was determined to take the Oath "in spite of the Bishops (the pope & the Pretender)", and considered that "these meek & mild Vicars of the Vicar of Christ .." were capable of using "every method that Art, Intrigue, Falsehood, Calumny, etc, can invent" to obstruct the passing of the Bill.[1.] Henry Bostock, a London business-man writing to his brother-in-law in the country, reported that the Blue Book contained "a bold manly spirit, not exceeding, I hope, the just bounds of a Christian's & a Catholick's spirit, when roused to such a zealous exertion, by as unjustifiable as ill founded pretension to a sovereign despotic authority, & absolute control .. in such matters as do not .. fall under the power of ye Prelates". He hoped that his brother would agree that "we may be obedient sons of ye Catholic Church with(out) rejecting ye relief we have now reason to look for from Government".[2.] William Strickland wrote to the Nuncio at Liège denouncing the Vicars' highhandedness as "ill suited to the present times" and certain to irritate "a high minded people". He predicted that within a few weeks the "breaks between the BB and their flock" would be "irreperable", and begged the Nuncio to use his influence to prevent "the sad catastrophe".[3.]

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1. Throck. Mss. Thomas Selby to John Throckmorton, Jan.29th,1791.

2. Cambridgeshire Record Office Huddleston Papers, Henry Bostock to Ferdinand Huddleston at Sawston, Ash Wednesday, 1791

3. Propaganda Scrit. Anglia 5, f.268, Strickland to (the Papal Nuncio at Liege), Feb.18th, 1791.

Outside the combat area reactions were mixed, and Catholics genuinely uncertain of the rights of the case: the clergy therefore tended to follow their bishop. Thomas Talbot had declined to sign the Encyclical, and was, theoretically, himself a Committee member. A "good-natured soul", Talbot lacked forcefulness, and according to Alexander Geddes "never thought, and never will think, for himself".[1] His coadjutor Bishop Berington and the Staffordshire Clergy had been applying pressure to sway him to the Committee side; Anthony Clough had even set him a course of reading on the Papal Supremacy. On February 14th Joseph Berington, Clough, and three other Staffordshire priests induced Talbot to give a verbal approbation of the Oath and the Committee's actions, and an account of this transaction was published in the Blue Book.[2] In March the Staffordshire group circulated a written report of Talbot's Approbation to the clergy of the Middle District, and asked them to signify whether they would "join the Staffordshire Clergy, with your Bishops, in approving the Oath" and empower the Staffordshire group "to sign your name to any further declaration" which might be "aggreable to our superiors".[3] The replies to this letter illuminate the attitudes of ordinary missioners towards the disputes. As might be expected from the 'loading' of the circular, the majority of the replies favoured the Oath; of the twenty priests who accepted it most concerned themselves little about

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1. SCA. Geddes to Bp. Geddes, 21st Dec. 1789.

2. Recusant History 9 p.232.
   Second Blue Book, p.18.

3. B.A.A. c.1023, Thomas Southworth for the Staffordshire Clergy to Midland Clergy. March 3rd, 1791 (but several replies to this letter are dated Feb.28th).

theological niceties, but simply followed the lead of their Bishop and the activist Staffordshire men. The missioner at Brundon in Suffolk, for example, hadn't yet seen the Oath, but declared himself willing to take it.[1.] Arthur Vaughan at Harvington, while considering that the Oath contained nothing "an honest & well meaning C(atholic) need to boggle at" was equally, if less brazenly, influenced by the approval of his 'superiors'.[2.] Few of those who favoured the Oath made any comment on its theological content, though James Taylor at Sawston observed that though it "militates against certain points of discipline", the discipline of the Church "is liable to changes: often has been changed and done away as the necessity of times required. Therefore this objection has no force with me".[3.]

Perhaps because they felt themselves a minority at variance with "their superiors", the opponents of the Oath justified their dissent at greater length, and were particularly vocal on its apparent denial of Papal jurisdiction in England; Joseph Williams at

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1. B.A.A. c.1034, John Pateson to Southworth, March 6th, 1791. Southworth lists 20 supporters of the Oath, 15 opposers and 6 abstentions. Examination of the extant replies show that the figure should give 20 supporters, 13 opposers and 7 abstentions. To the list of supporters must be added the 13 Staffordshire clergy whose names were not included in the voting lists.
For the letters themselves, B.A.A. c.1011-57, cf. Sister Mary Cecily, O.P., unpublished Essay, The Politico-Religious Problem at the end of the 18th C., as seen through the eyes of the Midland District Clergy - a copy is kept at Archbishop's House, Birmingham. Sister Mary Cecily's dating of events and documents is occasionally eccentric.

2. B.A.A., c1029, Vaughan to Southworth, March 5th, 1791.

3. B.A.A., c1054, Taylor to Southworth, March 13th, 1791.

Worcester wrote that "a paragraph in .. the public papers importing that .. we abjure .. ye Supremacy of the Pope rang such a Peal in my ears as ought to alarm anyone who wishes to be thought a Roman Catholic". [1.] Nevertheless, many of the opponents of the Oath gave their views tentatively, even apologetically, and for them too the example of 'superiors' - the three Vicars of the London Western and Northern districts and the desire for unanimimity, weighed heavier than arguments. [2.]

If the priests of the 'Cisalpine' Middle district followed the lead of Bishops Talbot and Berington, those of the London district, no less understandably, joined the 'orthodox' Vicars in condemning the Oath. After the confrontation of February 8th Douglass requested the opinions of his priests on the matter, (a democratic procedure dispensed with in the North and West). The opinions of twenty five priests are on record. Only four favoured the Oath; three of these were active Committee worker [3.] and the fourth changed his mind as the disputes progressed. Twenty priests were decidedly hostile to the Oath, and one was undecided. [4.] One priest, Daniel Gaffey, listed his objections and they are worth setting out, as they present the main 'orthodox' position. Gaffey

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1. B.A.A. c1020, Williams to Southworth, Feb.28th, 1791.

2. e.g. B.A.A., c.1019, J. Pilling to Southworth, Feb.28th,1791
c.1038, Richard Fishwick to Southworth, March 7th,1791

3. James Archer, Thomas Rigby, Thomas Hussey.

4. A.A.W. 43/ita. 16, 25, 28, 29, 30, 32, 33, 34, 36.
Item 16 is a list of the clergy present at the 'anti-Committee' meeting at Castle Street, Feb. 10th, 1791. - Dawn I, p.

noted seven objections. These were:

1. The title, ('Protesting Catholic Dissenters') implying, he argued the acceptance of 'sectarian' status for the Catholic Church.
2. The clause in the Oath to maintain the Protestant succession, committing Catholics to disobey any future Catholic King.
3. The term 'heretical' applied to the deposing doctrine, which doctrine, though false, was not formally heretical.
4. The ambiguity of the clause denying the Pope's power over the 'persons' of English Catholics, which seemed to deny his spiritual jurisdiction.
5. The assertion that repentance was necessary for the remission of sins - implying the inefficacy of infant baptism.
6. The denial of the Pope's power to absolve from the obligations of any oaths - religious vows, for example.
7. The denial of any infallibility in the Pope, a doctrine held by many Catholics. [1.]

Clearly, orthodox objections sprang from the Oath's many ambiguities and imprecisions rather than from a conviction of actual error. Indeed, one of the doughtiest of orthodox fighters, Charles Plowden, thought that the Oath, after a few slight emendations, was 'objectionable', but not 'heretical', and should not be formally condemned.[2.] The Cisalpine clergy, aware of the fineness of many of the points at issue, advocated a policy of the "large swallow", and were prepared to make many concessions to the language of

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1. A.A.W., Daniel Gaffey to Bp. Douglass, 24th Feb. 1791
2. A.A.W., C. Plowden to Bp. Douglass, May 1st, 1791.

'common life' at the expense of that of the "schools". Verbal niceties were simply "not worth contending about". James Archer, moreover, warned Douglass that to oppose the oath now "can have no other effect, than to injure the cause of our Religion, impede its propogation, and revive against us every hateful prejudice". More darkly and not perhaps without some wishful thinking, he hinted that "if it be known from what influence such opposition is made (as known it most certainly will be) the legislature of this country will be moved to interfere with our Ecclesiastical government here, and to alter it, perhaps with a very rude hand". [1.] On such faint echoes of the French National Assembly and the Layman's Letters the Cisalpines grounded their comfort, and the orthodox their fears.

In February the Bill came before the House of Commons, passing through its committee stage in April. Here both Bill and Oath were altered, and the offending title "Protesting Catholic Dissenters" dropped. Bishop Douglass thought the changes sufficient to make the Oath acceptable, but Walmesley and Gibson continued to oppose it. [2.] The Bill was introduced into the House of Lords amidst frantic lobbying by both sides, and Walmesley even appealed to the Archbishop of Canterbury to squash it. The resolution of the difficulties came, however, from a totally unexpected source. Joseph Berington had never relished the phrasing of the Oath, though he thought it acceptable. He now approached Douglass, and suggested that the Bishop should sign a letter, drafted by Berington, to the

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1. A.A.W., J. Archer to Douglass, Feb.21st, 1791.

2. Dawn, I., p.283

Anglican Bishop of St. David's, Samuel Horsley, asking him to intervene. Douglass agreed, and Horsley more than justified the trust. He persuaded the Lords that the disputed Oath would prove disastrous to the Catholics who were all loyal, though not all could accept that Oath; the Oath from the Irish Relief Act of 1779 was substituted unopposed, and the Bill became law on June 24th, 1791.[1.]

WILKES, - and Liberty

The disputes, however, did not end there. Walmesley's suspension of Wilkes at the height of the controversy was seen as an affront to the Committee as a whole, for Wilkes was its only vulnerable member, the others being laymen or Bishops. "It seems a determined point that I shall be the Scape Goat of the Committee, and turned out loose upon the world loaded with all its iniquities".[2.] The Cisalpines rallied to his support. At a crowded general meeting in London Joseph Berington read a letter signed by the thirteen clergy of Staffordshire, defending Wilkes, appealing to the Committee to secure his reinstatement, and resolving to make his "cause" their own. The same meeting, as an act of defiance against the Vicars, voted that the Protestation should be lodged in the British Museum. The Committee rejoiced

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1. Dawn, I. pp.286ff. Oscott II, 2681, p.53. Mss notes by Kirk.

2. Throck Mss. Wilkes to Throckmorton, Oct. 31st, 1791

to be told by the Museum Secretary that it would be placed between Magna Carta and the Solemn League and Covenant, [1.] though their opponents were, understandably, less impressed. If it must be preserved for the astonishment of posterity, Charles Plowden asked, ".. why is it not bottled on the shelf of monstrous fetuses (sic) in the Leverian collection?" [2.]

The orthodox too, rallied to their own standard. In July 1791 the lawyer Francis Plowden published a lengthy review of the Oath controversy defending the Vicars and condemning the Cisalpines, and stressing their 'democratic' rendencies. ".. surely a well-ordered government .. in these levelling days, will not be very forward in discouraging subordination and obedience to superiors lawfully appointed ..". [3.] Infuriating as this "low and despicable ... courtly sycophantic declaration" was to the Cisalpines, [4.] an Answer to the Second Blue Book by Plowden's brother Charles, and purporting to be written at the request of the Vicars, proved even more so. Plowden spoke of "religion betrayed for the sake of temporal emoluments", of "systematical attacks" on the "purity of the faith", of "false brethren" inaugurating a persecution under the "mask of toleration". [5.] He maintained that the Committee actions exceeded the "bitterness of laical malevolence" and could only have been "ripened" by "corrupted priests": the Committee had been "inveigled" by "those worst of Republicans, innovating priests". [6.] Since Plowden at

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1. Dawn, I. pp.316-322. Printed minutes of meeting. Throck. Mss. Petre to Throckmorton, Nov.6th, 1791
2. C. Plowden, Answer, p.II, note.
3. F. Plowden, The Case Stated ... occasioned by the Act of Parliament lately Passed ... (London 1791), pp.87, 158.
4. Throck. Mss. Petre to Throckmorton, July 19th, 1791
5. Plowden, Answer, p.2, 14, 64-5, 149, etc.
6. ibid., pp.55, 116, 127, 132.

to be told by the Museum Secretary that it would be placed between Magna Carta and the Solemn League and Covenant, [1.] though their opponents were, understandably, less impressed. If it must be preserved for the astonishment of posterity, Charles Plowden asked, ".. why is it not bottled on the shelf of monstrous fetuses (sic) in the Leverian collection?" [2.]

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several points in his pamphlet specifically mentioned the Staffordshire clergy, [1]. Berington and his associates assumed, not unnaturally, that the attacks on the "false brethren" and "depraved sons of the sanctuary" who had "debauched" the Committee, referred to themselves. On September 8th Berington wrote to Douglass vigorously denying the charges, and claiming that he had never been "an admirer of the Protestation, of the Oath, or of all their measures", [2]. Three weeks later a formal protest against Plowden's pamphlet was sent by the Staffordshire men to each of the Vicars, and to Plowden himself. When this produced no effect, they cited Plowden for calumny to Bishop Walmesley, who declined to have "anything to do with such a business". Frustrated of "redress without clamour" the Staffordshire priests determined on a public denial of Plowden's charges, and in January 1792 published an Appeal to the Catholics of England, refuting clause by clause the accusations of Plowden's work and giving an account of their unsuccessful requests for a canonical redress against the culprit. [3]. The Appeal ended with a defence of the integrity and good faith of the Staffordians who "have endeavoured from the pulpit, to defend the best principles of morality" and while exhibiting "the real tenets of our religion" to dispel the "prejudices" entertained against their faith. Part of this defence took the form of a "short exposition of our tenets" destined to become the centre of yet another Cisalpine stand against the Vicars.

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1. ibid., pp.171, 160-1.

2. A.A.W. J. Berington to Douglass, Sept.8th, 1791.

3. The whole transaction, with copies of the various letters is set out in An Appeal to the Catholics of England by the Catholic Clergy of the County of Stafford. (Wolverhampton, 1792).

The 'exposition', like the rest of the pamphlet, was Berington's work, and ran as follows:

"We know, as others do, what our faith is, and in that knowledge we have learned to distinguish what is human from what is divine. We believe our Church to be an infallible guide in all that appertains to salvation. Of this Church we believe the Bishop of Rome to be the head, supreme in Spirituals by divine appointment, supreme in discipline by ecclesiastical institution; but in the concerns of state and civil life, we believe him to be no governor, no master, no guide. - We believe that the jurisdiction of bishops is of divine origin; but that that jurisdiction is distinctly defined, that its limits are all known, that is, that its exercise must be circumscribed within the sphere, and be conformable to the rules, of established order. - We believe that the priesthood is from Christ, the rights of which are as sacred as those of the pontifical and of the episcopal order, and that the forms of ancient practice, which must ever be revered, have sanctioned the exercises of those rights, and marked their limits". [1.]

This was, in fact, a rewriting of the notorious "loose" passage on the Papacy in Reflections, and of a similar section on the independence of prists and Bishops in the State and Behaviour, [2.] but even more than its sources the "Staffordshire Creed" was loaded with ambiguity, and in the strained atmosphere of the time seemed a direct challenge to Papal and Episcopal authority. The 'Staffordians'

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1. ibid., pp.21-2.

2. State and Behaviour, pp.152-4.
   Reflections, pp.68-70.

were at this time implicated however, in a more direct confrontation with authority. The Staffordshire Letter to the General Meeting in June 1791 had produced no definite results; despite pleas for leniency from the General Meeting, from Douglass, from the Bath Congregation and from his own advisers, Walmesley remained adamant, and insisted that Wilkes should retract his signature from the Second Blue Book's "Protest and Appeal". A "Remonstrance" against Walmesley's actions was drawn up by the Cisalpine Clergy in London and circulated in the Northern and Middle districts for signatures. Then, in September, Wilkes signed a document declaring that he "willingly withdraws that Protest and gives up the Appeal", a form of words which Walmesley considered a sufficient retraction, and Wilkes accordingly returned to his normal duties.[1.] The Cisalpines, too, understood Wilkes' action as a capitulation, and were appalled. Both the Beringtons, Anthony Clough, Lord Petre and William Fermor met and persuaded Wilkes to vindicate his loyalty to the Cisalpine cause. On September 28th he published an open letter explaining that he had "withdrawn and given up" his "Protest and Appeal" not because he thought them wrong, but because they were no longer necessary, the Bill having passed into law; he declared that no renunciation of the propriety of the "Protest and Appeal" was implied in his submission.[2.] Walmesley responded by revoking Wilkes' faculties, and the Cisalpines rejoiced in a martyr. "My dear Throck" wrote Lord Petre, "I congratulate you on this fresh attack on Mr. Wilks,(sic) as it completely justifies his character and firmness to

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1. Dawn, I. pp.324-7.
2. ibid., pp.328-9.

the cause of the committee, which I assure you I have found very uphill work to defend!"[1] Further matter for rejoicing came in the excommunication by Walmesley of some lay members of the Bath congregation who supported Wilkes by withdrawing their subscriptions to the mission and paying them to Wilkes. All this was felt to be "uncanonical", for Wilkes considered that Walmesley was overturning the "rules of this mission" and the canons of the Church in denying him the right to appeal against a sentence conscientiously believed to be unjust. He welcomed this "egregious blunder" which would enable the Cisalpines to "turn the tables against our adversaries, and prove that after all their declamation in favour of papal power, they have abandoned the only principle which can support the least preeminence in the Apostolic See".[2] Wilkes insisted on going through the due 'canonical' forms of protest against an unjust decision. He informed Walmesley of his intention to appeal to Rome, and in the presence of witnesses read the Bishop a formal 'Reclamation', whose effect was marred by the fact that Walmesley, being hard of hearing, was unable to hear a word.[3]

There was a certain incongruity in a Cisalpine campaign to maintain the prerogative of Rome as a court of appeal against the Vicars, and this unfamiliar role proved something of an embarrasment to Wilkes. He explained to Throckmorton that he had never intended his appeal to Rome to institute 'judicial proceedings', an idea which "would be absurd in an Englishman and would very justly give umbrage in this nation". His intention had merely been "to enable that

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1. Throck. Mss., Petre to Throckmorton, Nov.6th, 1791
2. Throck.Mss., Wilkes to Throckmorton, Nov.12th, 1791
3. A.A.W., Walmesley to Douglass, Nov.25th, 1791
   Throck. Mss., Wilkes to Throckmorton, Nov.9th, Nov.12th, 1791.

political court to judge how admirably their Vicarial government is conducted". However, he had decided "not to have even the most indirect correspondence with .. the Roman Court. If we are not competent to settle our own difficulties, it is time we should assert ourselves and become so". [1.] Nevertheless, he hoped that his case would reveal the contradictions and injustice of the Vicarial system, and urged a Cisalpine conference in the Middle District to take advantage of the crisis: "Nothing but a good plan, concerted by a few individuals, is wanting to place us on a very desirable footing". [2.]

The immediate outcome of Wilkes' endeavours was a printed Address to the Clergy signed by the Staffordshire clergy, declaring Walmesley's behaviour "arbitary, unjust and uncanonical", and inviting the clergy to "a temperate, a regular, a christian resistance"; the Address stressed the defencelessness of mission clergy in the face of Vicarial tyranny, unless they acted swiftly, and concertedly. With what must surely have been intended as irony the pamphlet argued that Walmesley's denial of the right to Appeal and Protest (which he had called Jansenistical) was derogatory from the supremacy of Rome, to whom the appeal had been made. [3.] The Wilkes cause thus became a cause celebre for both sides; the Cisalpines viewed it as proof of the arbitary and unjust nature of Vicarial government, while the orthodox saw the Cisalpine championship of Wilkes against his bishop as an exposure of their Jansenistical and schismatic tendencies.

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1. Throck. Mss., Wilkes to Throckmorton, Nov.15th, 1791

2. Throck. Mss., Same to same, Nov.21st, 1791.

3. Address to the Catholic Clergy of England by their brethren of the County of Stafford. (London 1792)

Staffordshire figured in all this as a sort of Pandemonium ; "There is a laxity both of practice and opinion .. in that county" complained John Milner, "which I hope exists in no other"; while James Archer, for the Cisalpines, expressed his surprise and pleasure at finding "such a superiority of intellectual light" amongst the Clergy there.[1.] One "poisen pen" letter dispatched to Berington as a result of the Staffordshire Address accused him and his accomplices of betraying Catholicism - "Yr catalogue of sins, I fear, has long been curtailed or reduced to an empty name. Perhaps Priestley & the rest of your friends of the same kidney have helped to ease you of some of the burthen. With you the wall of separation between divine truth and heretical error is so thin that the latter is as perfectly harmless as the former".[2.] Indeed, some of the Cisalpine clergy themselves were having second thoughts. Anthony Clough, at one time the chief mover of the Staffordshire Clergy, refused to sign the Address, and warned John Kirk against Berington. " .. Wherever I went in the Summer of 90 I found he was considered by all persons as non rectus in fide. The Divinity Professor at Oxford told Mr. Berington of Winsley that his Br(other) Joseph was no Catholic".[3.]

Orthodox concern was at this time turned to more mundane matters; the Cisalpine laity had begun to apply financial pressure in the Wilkes case. Subscriptions were asked for a new chapel in Monmouth; from the Cisalpines little was forthcoming. Throckmorton

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1. Farm Street, Milner to Plowden, Nov.19th, 1791 (Archer's remark quoted).

2. A.A.W. J. Barrow to Douglass, July 31st, 1792, enclosing a copy of his letter to Berington, dated March , 1791.

3. B.A.A., c1128, Clough to Kir, Dec.27th, 1791.

refused to "administer an occasion for a Vicar Apostolic to appress a Priest and insult a congregation" [1]. and Lord Petre also refused any money until "steps are taken to form an ecclesiastical government among ourselves on which some dependence may be placed". [2] Indeed, Petre had already resorted to the drastic step of paying Wilkes the £50 normally given to Walmesley.

The Cisalpines were in fact edging or being edged into further extremes. The Wilkes case was seen by them as the initiation of an orthodox 'hunt'. "The game that is playing", wrote Wilkes, "I understand to be, first to expell me from England, then to force Ch. Berington to retract or resign his mitre, afterwards to call Mr. Talbot to an account, and then probably to attack all the clergy who have sided with the Committee": some such plan was in fact being urged by Milner and Plowden. [3] John Throckmorton, aided by Wilkes and the Anglican parson at Buckland, set about a new edition of his Layman's Letter, with a great deal of additional material, including a defence of the Oath of Supremacy. This was no mere personal quirk. Lord Petre had himself composed such an essay, as a prelude to taking the Oath, and intended only "for the perusal of a few friends, & for others who are well inclined to take the Oath of supremacy", for he feared that the proposal would "alarm the Body at large, who are certainly not ripe for such a discussion". [4]

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1. Clifton, Sharrock to Walmesley, March 20th, 1791
2. Clifton, Lord Petre to Sharrock, Feb.2nd, 1792.
3. Throck. Mss., Wilkes to Throckmorton, Dec.7th, 1791.
4. Throckmorton III, pp.85-95.
   Throck. Mss., GB II/letters 32-3, from J. Rawbone.
   Throck. Mss., Petre to Throckmorton, Nov.6th, 1791.

Throckmorton's new publication attacked the "Papistic Party" among the English Catholics more vehemently than ever. He maintained that Rome had consistently appointed as rulers in England men who placed allegiance to the Pope above allegiance to their country, accused the martyrs of treason, and argued that as long as English Catholics were ruled from Rome "neither the principles nor allegiance of the Catholic Clergy are secure". He argued that the Pope's jurisdiction in England had been based even in Catholic times on "human law and the consent of the government" and that since the "supreme authority" of the State had abolished that jurisdiction Catholics "ought to acquiesce". Once more he urged the clergy to declare that ".. they will no longer submit to the arbitrary uncanonical government of apostolic Vicars; let them insist on having a regular church-government and pastors properly appointed.."[1]. This, wrote Plowden, was "schism direct", plainly designed ".. to render our necessary connexion with Rome odious to Government .. All this forwards the plan, which I fear, has been laid for some years, to establish one or more Schismatical Bishops among us".[2] Such fears were increased by the formation of the "Cisalpine Club" in April. The Committee's term of office ending about this time, they had decided not to stand for re-election. The club, however, represented a continuation of the Committee, for its founder members were all Committee men or their supporters. The conception of the club went back as far as July 1791 when Alexander Geddes, presumably at the request of Lord Petre, drew up a set of "Considerations on the present situation of the English Catholics", which contained a

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1. Throckmorton III, pp.49, 71, 97, 85.
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description of the aims of the club, and a set of rules.[1.]
It is easy to see why the essay was never published. Geddes argued that a revolution in England seems almost inevitable, and that there ought to be a group of Catholics ready to turn the revolution to religious advantage. This was best done, not by a Committee, whose very name 'is now odious', but by an exclusive dining club, adhering to the Protestation, professing loyalty to the nation, and disowning the Pope's "pretended jurisdiction". The club which did eventually emerge was not nearly so anti-Papal as Geddes would have wished, but its title was enough to scandalize the orthodox, who considered it to imply "a setting of their faces against the See of Rome". This very radicalism could be turned to use, and Bishop Douglass sent a deputation to Pitt, to enquire whether "Government would not wish these Cisalpines & the principles of these democratic Gentlemen to be opposed" [2.] and was delighted to receive Pitt's warm approbation for any measures the Vicars might adopt.

Meanwhile the attentions of the defenders of the faith were engaged once more by Joseph Berington. The Priestley riots had made Birmingham an unhealthy, or at least an unhappy, place for a liberal of Berington's stamp, and Sir John invited him to come to Buckland as chaplain. Douglass' permission was sought for Berington's entry into his district. Walmesley's advice was blunt - ".. admit not a viper into your bosom". Douglass was indeed unwilling to grant this turbulent priest faculties. As Milner pointed out, having Sir John Throckmorton in the district was bad enough, "but

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1. Essex Record Office, (Petre papers), D/DP.F.187
2. Clifton, Douglass to Walmesley, April 21st, 1792.

if Mr. Jos. will go to his lengths, we shall have a little church of Utrecht at Buckland". [1.] The Bishop, however, was equally reluctant to give a bald refusal. Late in April the Committee had published a third Blue Book, defending all their actions, reviving again the Wilkes case, and reasserting their right to protest against uncanonical action; for precedent here they cited "Holy Robert of Lincoln", [2.] but even Holy Robert did nothing to conciliate the orthodox. "I wonder they did not quote Holy Quesnel and Holy Arnauld and the Holy Sorbonnists who appealed from the Bull Ugenitus to a Gen(ere)l council. They seem to be peculiarly delighted in railing against Popes". [3.] A group of moderate laymen sought to reconcile the two parties in a "Mediation"; [4.] while these negotiations were in progress Douglass was unwilling to cause offence by refusing Berington's application. Sir John insisted on an answer however, and Douglass refused to receive Berington. [5.] His action coincided with the publication of a formal denunciation of Berington's works by Charles Plowden, [6.] which, it was hoped, would induce Talbot to demonstrate solidarity with the other Vicars by censuring the "Modern Abeillard". [7.] Claiming that Berington's

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1. A.A.W., Walmesley to Douglass, April 21st, 1791.
   Milner to Douglass, July 26th, 1792.
2. Third Blue Book, p.II
3. A.A.W., Bannister to Douglass, May 10th, 1792.
4. Clifton, Douglass to Walmesley, May 18th, 1792.
   Dawn, I. pp.339ff.
5. ibid.
   A.A.W, Milner to Douglass, 26th July 1792.
   A.A.W., Berington to Douglass, 29th July 1792.
6. Charles Plowden, Remarks on the Writings of the Revd. Joseph Berington, (London 1792)
7. Clifton, Plowden to Walmesley, May 13th 1792.
   Douglass to Walmesley, May 18th 1792.

"Affectation of singularity, fondness for novel opinions, contempt for the depositaries of spiritual authority, self-preference and disdain of his equals" had "betrayed him into endless errors on the subject of religion", Plowden denounced seventeen propositions from Berington's works, including part of the "Staffordshire Creed".[1.] Talbot refused to oblige, however, and the other Vicars proceeded with secret plans to censure John Throckmorton's works once the Mediation was over.[2.] On May 9th Plowden, Milner and Berington met at London in the presence of witnesses, and Plowden gave an assurance that he had not been referring to the Staffordshire priests in the disputed portions of his Answer; Berington took care to improve the shining hour by informing Plowden that his works were deliberately "loosely worded" to "win over Protestants" and that Plowden had "shewed (sic) so little discernment in the choice of the seventeen propositions" that he himself could "easily have selected seventeen others much worse than those".[3.]

The work of the Mediators ended in an uneasy truce between Cisalpine and orthodox.[4] By this time the ordinary Catholic gentleman or priest, was thoroughly tired of wrangling, and heartedly hoped, with Henry Bostock, that ".. the whole w(oul)d be at an end".[5.] But five years of battle could not so easily be

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1. Plowden, Remarks, pp.xi, 117-125.
2. Clifton, year 1792 item 90, Douglass to Walmesley, n.d.
3. Dawn, I. p.357-9.
   Clifton, Plowden to Walmesley, May 13th, 1792
   Plowden, Remarks on a book Entitled Memoirs of Panzani (Liege 1794) pp.23, 32-3.
4. Dawn, I p.356
5. Cambridgeshire Record Office (Huddleston Papers) Henry Bostock to Ferdinand Huddleston, May 1st, 1792.

forgotten and the 'truce' was short-lived. Even while the Mediation was in progress Douglass was consulting with Milner about his refusal of Berington's faculties, and Milner was pressing for stern measures with the 'Buckland Philosopher' to "disconcert those ill-affected disciples of his". [1.] Plans were also being laid for a condemnation of Sir John's pamphlets and the latest Blue Book. Milner offered to provide the occasion for such a censure by denouncing Sir John, as Plowden had denounced Berington. [2.] Robert Bannister, who thought himself something of an expert in such matters, offered his assistance in fixing appropriate censures to the offending propositions.[3.]

Such proceedings did not appeal to all the orthodox. Simon Bordley, a typical "old Catholic", thought the Vicars should content themselves with ignoring the Cisalpines, combatting them only by teaching true doctrine, or letting the scribblers on either side fight it out.[4.] His sentiments were shared by Bishop Talbot in the Midlands, who refused to take any part in the proceedings, to the grim satisfaction of the other Vicars, who now thought of Talbot as an acknowledged Cisalpine puppet. They continued to preserve the greatest secrecy, and James Barnard, Douglass' "Grand Vicar",

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1. A.A.W., 43/154 n.d. Milner to Douglass.

2. Clifton, Douglass to Walmesley, July 10th 1792. Walmesley declined Milner's suggestion on the grounds that disciplinary initiatives should lie with the bishops - "We should appear negligent in our office, did we not speak till we were called upon in a public manner". Clifton, Walmesley to Douglass, 14th July 1792. Gibson also refused, on the different ground that Milner and Plowden might be setting a fashion in denunciation if the Bishops take any notice of them. Clifton, Gibson to Walmesley, July 16th 1792.

3. Ushaw Mss. 454 c., R. Bannister to Gibson, July 10th 1792

4. A.A.W., Simon Bordley to Douglass, August 9th, 1792.

advised them, in the light of the Wilkes case, to submit all their deliberations to Rome, to ensure that they should be canonical.[1.] On August 25th the Vicars met in London, and formally censured twelve propositions from Sir John's works. Books by Berington, Geddes and other Cisalpines were also condemned, but in the pastoral letter which eventually appeared only Sir John's works and Geddes' Bible, which had recently appeared, were censured by name.[2.] Even after signing the pastoral not all the Vicars were happy. Gibson feared it would provoke more discord, and only signed the published work for the sake of a united front.[3.] He need not have troubled himself, for the pastoral eventually appeared not merely without Talbot's name, but with a large and conspicuous space where his name should have been. Appeals to him to sign had merely provoked a sharp accusation of trouble-making.[4.]

Lay reaction to the pastoral was mixed. Edward Smythe of Acton Burnell thought it very proper that Catholics who propogated "Diabolical .. republican & levelling principles" should be disowned. Robert Berkeley, however, living in the same district, thought differently. "..The times are not favourable to Inquisitors or those who mean to support the principles of the Inquisition". Like so many Catholic gentry, Berkeley found it impossible to view the matter as purely Ecclesiastical. "..I think the censure of Sir John Throckmorton imprudent as he is a person of very large property and related

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1. A.A.W., Barnard to Douglass, August 4th, 1792.

2. A Pastoral Letter fro(the) Vicars Apostolic to all the Faithful. (London 1792). The pastoral was written by Milner, but to prevent this being known, was copied out in another hand before being sent to the printer, thus delaying publication.
A.A.W., 44/114a. Mss.notes by Milner on August meeting.
Clifton, Gibson to Walmesley, Oct.21st 1792

3. A.A.W., Gibson to Douglass, Oct.12th, 1792.

4. Dawn II, p.41.

to the principle Catholic Families in these parts .. the attacks on Dr. Geddes .. I consider as a wanton affront offered to Lord Petre".[1] The promulgation of the Pastoral might be considered an orthodox success; others were being wraught in Rome. At the prompting of Charles Plowden an Irish Jesuit in Rome, James Connell set about translating 102 propositions from Joseph Berington's writings for denunciation to the Holy Office, and from Italy word was passed on the Cisalpine grapevine that Berington should prepare to defend himself.[2] Indeed, suspicion of orthodox activities in the eternal city were rife, and a rumour that Bishop Talbot had been denounced by the other Vicars provoked a threat by one Cisalpine squire to spend a thousand pounds to "persecute" them.[3] The Vicars were in fact engaged in a secret correspondence with Rome to ensure that Bishop Berington would not succeed to the Middle District in the event of Talbot's death. They had even considered asking Talbot to persuade his coadjutor to retract the Blue Books, but the conviction that the "gentleman in Staffordshire either lets things vadere ut vadunt or glide down the stream" prevailed. "Nothing would be done" declared Walmesley "and at the same time would raise a great noise and clamour against us".[4] In February Milner's Ecclesiastical Democracy Detected appeared, a comprehensive attack on the Cisalpine

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1. Clifton, Edward Smythe to Sharrock (?) Feb.5th 1793.
B.A.A., A.295 Robert Berkeley to Bishop Talbot quoted in full in Worcestershire Recusant No.14, by Mrs. A.M. Hodgson to whom I am indebted for the reference.

2. Farm Street, James Connell to Charles Plowden, 6th Dec.1792
Same to same n.d. post-marked 10th March 1793.
B.A.A. C.1274 Antonio Salvaggi to John Kirk from Rome, 8th Feb. 1793 (Italian).

3. Clifton, Gibson to Walmesley, Jan23rd 1793

4. Clifton, Douglass to Walmesley (received) Feb.14th 1793.
A.A.W., Walmesley to Douglass, 1st March 1793.
Leeds, Bannister to Gibson, April 4th, 1792

in general, and Throckmorton in particular, in which the "democratical cast" of Sir John's writings was fully stressed, and their agreement with the 'excesses' of 'Jacobinical levellers' drawn out.[1.] Milner, as was his wont, pulled no punches, nevertheless with Sir John travelling abroad with Joseph Wilkes peace might still have been hoped for. But in May 1793 Berington published The Memoirs of Gregorio Panzani, in effect the standard Cisalpine history of English Catholicism, intended to meet Sir John's wish for a work which would expose ".. an ecclesiastical government depending upon a foreign power, and its whole influence exercised, to prevent (Catholics) from giving to the government of their country that security of their good behaviour which the laws required".[2.] The core of the Panzani was a translation of an account of the mission of Gregorio Panzani to England, in the reign of Charles I, which Berington found among the papers of the historian, Dodd.[3.] To this he added an 'Introduction' and 'Supplement', providing an 'history' of English Catholicism from the Reformation to 1793. The theme of the book is the constant tyranny and callousness of the "Court of Rome", who in the exercise of an "arbitrary jurisdiction" and a "feudal system of policy" had enslaved the English Church, prevented its members from giving rightful allegiance to their country, and refused the clergy's demands for the hierarchy which was their Christian right. Of this policy the

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1. J. Milner Ecclesiastical Democracy Detected (London 1793) Milner drew attention to Throckmorton's presidency of the 'Friends of the People' (p2) and, like Plowden, constantly conjoined adjectives such as 'democratic' and 'schismatical' - "The true spirit of modern democracy and schism".
2. Throckmorton III, pp.vii-xii.
3. For an account of the original 'memoirs', and of the transactions they describe, see the introduction to the Gregg Press reprint, (1971) by Professor T. A. Birrell, of Nimuegan University, Holland. I am grateful to Professor Birrell for lending me the manuscript of his essay, and for much helpful advice.

Regulars and Jesuits, whose nature is "to extend obedience almost to anything", were the tools, and the unrelenting enemies of the Secular clergy. "Rome therefore, must patronize their labours, and vindicate their claim to privileges, when it was become manifest how much those privileges had attached them to its nearest interests, the supremacy and universal sovereignity of its bishop". [1.]

Oddly enough, Panzani is no more extreme than most Cisalpine writing, and a good deal less than some. It made the usual distinction between true ("Protesting") English Catholics, and the Roman "sycophants" who had brought about the distrust of the nation and the penal laws by their disloyalty. But where Sir John had suggested that the English Catholics should take their freedom from Roman domination into their own hands, Berington merely urged them to apply to Rome for permission to have Bishops-in-ordinary. There were hints of a sterner attitude; though he recommended his contemporaries to make their application to Rome for Bishops, he condemned their predecessors for doing just that, and his comments seemed suspiciously like those of the Layman, of Geddes, and of Clifford. "Had they (the English Catholics in 1590's) deliberated to better purpose, and consulting their church chosen such a number of bishops as .. the people required, the measure would have been more consonant with the spirit of primitive discipline, while it would have secured them from a world of difficulties, into which their too subservient attention to the Roman Court was soon to precipitate them .." [2.] The reason for Berington's uncommon reticence lay perhaps in the Vicars' Pastoral against Sir John, which threatened

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2. ibid., p.43

with suspension any priest who maintained the Baronet's 'system'. There was, nevertheless, ample matter for orthodox censure, from the constant condemnations of English dependence on "a foreign court" and the claim that the responsibility for England's lapse into heresy rested on Paul IV, to the reflection that "The days of passive obedience are gone: and it is the weight of evidence, not the mere mandates of authority, that can now ensure submission". [1.] The Oath of supremacy was a particularly sore point with the orthodox. Francis Plowden, lawyer, and brother of the doughty Charles, had been a pillar of the orthodox lobby against the Oath, and had published a vindication of the Vicars in 1791. At the end of 1792 however, he turned his coat, with the publication of his Jura Anglorum - The Rights of Englishmen. In this book he put forward his own version of the Whig theory of the alliance between Church and State, conceding the Cisalpine claims that all Ecclesiastical discipline (as opposed to doctrine) was subject to the control of National Churches and the veto of the State. He argued that the Oath of Supremacy left 'spirituals' untouched, and had reserved to the State a supremacy which had belonged to the Pope not by right, but by grant. [2.] Berington now cheerfully rubbed salt into this particular wound, urging "one bold man" to take the Oath, and citing Plowden's work in support. [3.] A further provocation appeared in Berington's account

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1. ibid., pp.3-4, 434.

2. Francis Plowden Jura Anglorum: The Rights of Englishmen (London 1792) pp.87ff, 236ff, 273ff, 284ff. For orthodox dismay at this volte-face, A.A.W., Walmesley to Douglass, Feb.21st, 1793. Plowden's 'conversion' was lasting; though called to account publicly by his brother Robert (also an ex-Jesuit) in A Letter to Francis Plowden .. on his Work .. Jura Anglorum (London n.d.1794) he published another "treachurous and scandalous Quarto" entitled Church and State (London 1795) maintaining and elaborating his new position, that all honest English Catholics were and ought to be "sworn Cisalpines" (Church and State p.116)

3. Panzani, p.II.

of the English Seminaries abroad, whose very existence he deplored, since from their very inception they had "imbibed an ultramontane spirit" and so provoked the suspicions of the Government against Catholics. He recommended the abolition of all such "foreign establishments", and with them the English provinces of the various Orders, and the foundation of one seminary in England: all enmity between Seculars and Regulars would thus be abolished, for all English clergy would be Seculars![1.] Berington went on to outline the evils of government by Vicars Apostolic, and to propose a plan for their replacement by Ordinaries in which, after consultation with their Vicars, the clergy of all the Districts should "without circumlocution" inform Rome that "a government by Vicars Apostolic is no longer agreeable to us".[2.] The real sting of the book, however, lay in the Preface, which, in addition to a gleeful reference to the imminent downfall of the Papal States, a threat to publish a history of the "Decline and Fall" of the Papacy, and an attack on devotion to the Sacred Heart of Mary, contained a savage lampoon on Milner and Plowden which even his friends regretted - "Raphael never stooped to caricature".[3.] These "Indecencies" were impossible to ignore; as one of Walmesley's correspondents wrote ".. If a man approved by (Bp. Talbot) can publicly dispense such tenets without either being suspended or making a formal retraction ... there is an end of episcopal authority".[4.] Walmesley was for strong measures, and talked of excommunicating both Berington and Sir John, "to throw a

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1. ibid., pp.22-4, 456-9.
2. ibid., pp.459-472.
3. Throck. Mss., Wilkes to Throckmorton, August 24th, 1793. Panzani, pp.v - xxxv.
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wholesome alarm among our libertine Catholics".[1] The Vicars wrote to Talbot, asking him to censure Berington, but once again he refused, and the matter soon passed out of his competence, since Berington entered Douglass' district without faculties, and settled at Buckland.[2]

The battle progressed on other fronts. In June Alexander Geddes informed Douglass that he intended publishing a reply to the Pastoral condemning his and Sir John's works; Douglass took the opportunity to suspend "this bad man". Geddes printed the correspondence in his work, which appeared at the end of the year, and which also included attacks on the Council of Trent, the rules of abstinence, Latin in the Liturgy, and the institution of the Index. By contrast he defended Sir John's and Berington's writings, the validity of anglican orders, and the "candour, affability and moderation" of Bishop Talbot - a tribute which that prelate must have viewed with mixed feelings.[3]

A further confrontation occured in the Middle District. Throughout 1793 a Cisalpine Club plan to found a school in England was being vigorously pursued, and as vigorously opposed by the Bishops. Doctor John Bew, a Sorbonnist and a "perfect Berington" was resident in Walmesley's district. He was invited to take charge of the school, which the Cisalpines intended should give ".. the final overthrow to all foreign and ultramontane notions".[4] Bew applied to Walmesley for permission to leave his district; hardly surprisingly, though with a

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1. Clifton, Walmesley to Douglass, July 3rd, 1793

2. A.A.W., Berington to Douglass, July 7th, 1793
Dawn II, pp.45-5

3. A Geddes A Letter .. to the RR. John Douglass, Bishop of Centurial (London 1794) calling Douglass a "good-natured, condescending, whist-playing Priest!!". p.2.

4. Throck. Mss., Petre to Throckmorton, Nov.6th 1791

relish he did nothing to conceal, Walmesley refused.[1.] The plan of the school, now sited as Oscott and patronized by Bishop Talbot, was modified to that of a College and Seminary on the Douay plan. The orthodox were cynical about the "purest Principles and the most enlightened Piety" which the Cisalpines promised would be taught there, and a sharp inter-change of letters between Walmesley and Talbot failed to soften the Western Vicar. In the end Bew simply "deserted" and settled as Oscott.[2.]

Not all the initiatives lay with the Vicars. Sir John Throckmorton's presence in Rome was a source of uneasiness, aggravated by the news that attempts to have Bishop Berington set aside and his cousin suspended a sacris had run aground because the Roman administrators found themselves quite unable to decide which Berington was which.[3.] The zealous Connell, deep in extracting propositions from the Blue Books and Panzani, was soon to be mortified by the news that the Holy Office would not condemn Berington's writings piece-meal, and that his cento of quotations was useless. Grimly, he set about translating the State and Behaviour in its entirety.[4.] A further set-back came when Propaganda dispatched a letter to Walmesley counselling

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1. .. Clifton, Bew to Walmesley, July 13th, 1793.
Douglass to Walmesley, July 15th, 1793.
Coombes to Walmesley, July 28th, 1793.
Walmesley to Bew, August 2nd, 1793.
Walmesley to Bew, Nov.25th 1793.

2. Leeds, Printed Prospectus signed by Bps Talbot and Berington, Feb.27th 1794.
Talbot to Walmesley 22nd Sept. 1793.
Clifton, Douglass to Walmesley March 18th 1794

3. Clifton, Douglass to Walmesley, Jan.24th 1793
Douglass to Walmesley, July 15th 1793.

4. Farm Street, James Connell to Marmaduke Stone, July 6th.
Same to same, 4th Sept. 1793
Same to Plowden, 23rd August, 1794.

gentleness in dealing with the Cisalpines. This letter was a result of the activities of Francis Canning, the brother of one of the laymen excommunicated by Walmesley for their support of Wilkes. One of Canning's friends in Rome was Monsignor Charles Erskine, Promotor Fidei, and a Scot by birth. Erskine had used his influence to procure the letter, as a result of which Walmesley revoked the excommunication. Cisalpine morale was further boosted by Canning's account of an audience with Pius VI. The Pope had listened while Canning told him of the "harsh and arbitrary manner in which we had of late been governed by his Apostolic Vicars". At the end of the talk "he asked me with a significant smile whether the Bishop was a Frate (a friar). On my answering that he was a monk, he repeated e frate, e frate & did not seem surprised at what had happened".[1.] Canning considered that the advantage should be pressed home by a fulsome letter of thanks to the Pope ("don't fear to make compliments, flattery is everywhere acceptable, but nowhere more so than here"). This would open up a line of communication which would by-pass Propaganda and the Vicars, and by lessening their power make them "desirous of a change in our church government ..". The orthodox cup of bitterness was full when Erskine arrived in England in November, on a mission for the Pope, to sound out the possibilities of a formal embassy between the Vatican and the Court of St. James. Erskine's friendships with Canning, John Throckmorton, and Lord Petre were well known, and one of his first actions in England was to urge the Vicars to leniency. "He has given himself to the Cisalpines" complained Bishop Douglass.[2.]

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1. Throck. Mss., Francis Canning to Thos Canning from Rome, June 29th 1793.
   Same to same, July 28th, 1793.

2. Dawn II, pp. 37 ff

1794 then, opened in war. Berington was in the London District without faculties, where Geddes also was under a formal censure. Wilkes was abroad, but still under a cloud, and rumours reached England of proceedings at Rome against Panzani.[1.] Even the more moderate Cisalpines, like Sir John Lawson, had raised once more the question of Bishops-in-Ordinary.[2.] On the orthodox side, Charles Plowden published a reply to Berington's Panzani which was the fiercest attack to date on the whole Cisalpine movement, and its particular expression in Berington's works. In a prefatory address to Berington Plowden related his misdemeanours, from his dismissal from Douay for "delivering for Catholic truths the borrowed follies of a systematic deist" down to his latest work, ".. a rant against Popes who have befriended you, against Jesuits who have never harmed you, and against British Catholics .. who, because they are Catholics must detest your principles and disavow your doctrines".[3.] Plowden accepted the Cisalpine challenge to find in the history of the English Catholic community precedents for the present disputes and set out to demonstrate that Berington's 'models' were all rebels and schismatics in their own day,[4.] and therefore fitting ancestors for the Cisalpines, with "the fairest claim" to their "hug of fraternity".[5.] Berington "everywhere canonizes those, whose chief distinction was to have struggled against

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1. Throck.Mss. Wilkes to Throckmorton, Sept.10th 1793

2. Clifton, Gibson to Walmesley, Feb.15th 1794

3. C. Plowden, Remarks on a book entitled Memoirs of .. Panzani (Liege 1794), p.3.

4. Berington had praised 'Blacklo's Cabal', particularly Henry Holden, whose Analysis Fidei , eirenically separating the essence of the faith from "Scholastic superstructures", anticipated the aims and methods of Berington's own writings. - Panzani, p.277

5. Plowden, Remarks on Panzani, p.256

established authority".[1] "Established authority" is something of a theme in the Remarks; "whoever in these times is an enemy to the established sovereignty, may be presumed to be hostile to all", and Plowden pointed to the continental 'reformers' who, like Berington, professed to concern themselves only with "the abuses of spiritual power", but who were now "rioting in the ruins of thrones and altars".[2] Plowden made much of the links between the Cisalpines and the Josephinist movement, in particular the Pistoian schism, and his remarks were very much to the point. In January 1794 Berington reported that he was reading with interest and approval the account of the 'reforms' of the Bishops of Tuscany, "those enlightened men".[3] Other factors were helping to widen the gap between himself and the orthodox. His researches for his history of the Papacy were leading him to radical conclusions, however cautiously expressed - "I find, for instance, that from St. Peter to the time of Constantine there is no document to prove, that any primacy was exercised by the Roman Bishop. On this ground, I state the fact; but during all that period, I do not say, that those bishops were not jure divino, possessed of that primacy. The right to jurisdiction and its exercise are obviously different things".[4]

The growing tension was accentuated by the reaction of the Protestant reviewers to Panzani. "Thou art not far from Protestantism"

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1. ibid., p.272.
2. ibid., p.40
3. BAA c.1286, Berington to Kirk, Jan.2nd, 1794.
4. BAA, c.1310, Berington to Kirk, Dec.26th, 1794.

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wrote the European Reviewer, and the Monthly, in the same issue in which Paine's Age of Reason was reviewed, spoke of the "daring spirit of freedom" which had "burst the chains of civil and ecclesiastical tyranny". Berington "well known to the public as an enlightened and candid priest", had already "contributed by his writings to the diffusion of rational principles and a liberal spirit among his brethren ...". But this "enlightened Catholic priest" had inevitably given offence, and "must never expect to be at peace, till he has followed the Apostolic precept: "Come out from amongst them, and be separate"!" [1.]

The absence of event, therefore, concealed a growing rift between Cisalpine and orthodox. The establishment of refugee religious communities in England, whose reception convinced the orthodox that the nation felt nothing but "beneficient kindness" towards Catholics, seemed to the Cisalpines to threaten their endeavours to win public approval. "We were just becoming a little popular in our country" complained Lord Petre, "& over come these bigots and fanatics to raise all the cry against superstition and Popery over again". [2.] The extent of the gulf between the two parties may be judged from Lord Petre's activities in the Autumn of 1794. Grattan was in London with Fitzwilliam, the new Viceroy, to negotiate a settlement for the Irish Church which would ensure Catholic loyalty. Petre, backed by Thomas Hussey, suggested a scheme - "The plan is to stop all communication with Rome except through the King's ministers, and to enforce the observance of the acts of Provisors & Praemunire, the Bishops to be elected by their clergy and approved of by the King, and the King's

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1. European Review, June 1794. Monthly Review 14, pp 388-393; 15 pp.474.

2. Throck. Mss. Petre to Throckmorton, Sept.15th, 1794.

supremacy to be preserved as in Canada; I have pushed them all in my power to make our Ecclesiastical government part of the plan, which they like extremely ..." - and all this without consulting the Vicars![1] The scheme was, of course, totally impractible, and more than a little mad, yet it reflects the lengths to which some at least of the Cisalpines were prepared to go, and helps explain the orthodox fear of the growth of the 'Pistoian infection'.[2]

1795 brought matters to a head. In April Bishop Talbot died, and the other Vicars immediately renewed their efforts, begun during the Oath controversy, to have Bishop Berington set aside, or forced to retract. A long and wearisome correspondence which dragged on for the rest of the Bishop's life ensued, with Bishop Berington, urged on by his fellow Cisalpines, steadily refusing to make a full retraction of the Blue Books he had signed, and Rome equally steadily refusing to accept the compromise formulae the Bishop suggested.[3] On receiving the news of Talbot's death, the Bishop's cousin Joseph wrote to John Kirk, urging him and his Midland colleagues to seize this opportunity of freeing themselves from Rome. ".. declare .. that you feel yourselves impelled to resist .. and to reclaim the rights of the ancient British Church". He scorned half measures; ".. I wish, for the space of twelve months, I could infuse my mind onto the clergy of the middle district; at the end of that period or sooner, they should be as free and independent as ever was, in better days, the Church of Africa, & still be as orthodox and canonical as she was".[4]

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1. Throck.Mss. Petre to Throckmorton, Sept.24th, 1794
2. Clifton, Warmoll to Walmesley, Dec. 22nd, 1794
3. Dawn II, pp.130 ff. Sister Mary Cecily O.P. "The Politico-Religious Situation", Ch.4.
4. B.A.A., c.1325, Berington to Kirk, April 28th, 1795.

Petre and Throckmorton a little more practically began to canvass government support for the Bishop, on the grounds that a foreign power was attempting to force him to retract a declaration of Allegiance.[1.] But not all the orthodox wanted the Bishop to retract anything, civil or religious. Milner thought any retraction he might make would soon be explained away, and considered that he should be set aside altogether, as incurable. ".. I will depend upon seeing him to the end of his days the centre and support of Cisalpines and innovations of every description".[2.] Erskine, whose opinions changed with the company he kept, was enlisted to hinder Bishop Berington's faculties, and warming to his work became convinced that the Staffordshire clergy should be condemned, and Joseph Berington excommunicated. In September 1755 he wrote to Bishop Berington, complaining that "on this side (of the water) everything breathes such a spirit of adherence to the doctrines of innovators, such an air of independence with a preference to reprobated maxims, such an aversion, & it may even be .. said with a spite and desperate hatred against the apostolic see", and urging him to submit himself to "the supreme pastor, and hearken to his voice".[3.] The case of Bishop Berington was therefore charged with significance; entrenched in Staffordshire, where "everyone believes and acts as he pleases",

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1. Clifton, 1794 letter 36, Douglass to Walmesley, n.d.
   Douglass to Walmesley, April 22nd, 1796

3. A.A.W., Milner to Douglass, July 8th 1795
   Same to same, July 24th 1795
   Dawn, II, pp.131-3.

2. A.A.W. Milner to Douglass, Sept.29th 1795
   Same to same, Aug.21st 1795.

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surrounded by a clergy who were considered to be "supporters of downright Schism & Heresy", he represented a substantial threat to the orthodox desire for the subjugation of the Cisalpine rebels, - a rallying point.[1] Milner was not alone in the belief that unless Berington were set aside and a sounder man put in his place, schism would result.[2]

Schism, indeed, was no idle fear. Two documents among the Throckmorton papers, dating from this period, reveal that schism was not merely being considered, but planned. The first, in Sir John's hand, is a mere scrap, and clearly represents a portion of the draft of a longer document. On one side are set out the guide-lines for an attack on the "pretensions of Rome in opposition to the laws of this country, & to what we have declared & sworn". It goes on to condemn "a Church government dependent on a power making such pretensions.." and declares it to be necessary "that our clergy should be independent of such a control, for the sake of the laity over whom they have a great influence..". The reasons for abolishing this "dependence on a foreign power" is its threat to the "allegiance due to the Governm(ent) of this country..". On the reverse is a fragment of a declaration of independence, again cast in terms which stress the civil aspects of Roman 'domination' - "Convinced that obedience to such a delegated & arbitrary authority is not required of us by that religion which we inherit from our ancestors; that on the contrary it is a deviation from the general principles of church government ..(and) may be frequently incompatible with the allegiance we owe to our sovereign ... we hereby declare our rejection of the ecclesiastical government of this country by Vicars apostolic delegated

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1. Throck. Mss. Joseph Berington to Throckmorton, Sept.24th 1795.
   AAW. Milner to Douglass, Sept.10th 1795
2. AAW. Milner to Douglass, Dept.29th 1795.

at the will & pleasure of the court of Rome, & that in future we will pay ..". [1.] And there the document ends. The fragment, considered as a revelation of the state of mind of Cisalpine grandees like Sir John and Lord Petre, is surprising only in carrying into explicit formulation the measures which were already implicit in the Layman's Letters, in the writings of Geddes, in Berington's private correspondence or in Lord Petre's negotiations with his friends in high places. Considered as a serious declaration of schism it is laughable. The 1791 Act and Oath effectively removed any apprehensions at government level of Roman interference in the civil affairs of English Catholics: the presence of a papal representative at the British court , and the protection offered to the Papal states by England in the face of the advance of the Revolutionary armies, made the Cisalpine talk of Roman claims to Catholic allegiance hopelessly unreal. Another document, however, merits more serious consideration. The paper in question is in Joseph Berington's handwriting, and is headed "Reasons for altering our Church government or for withdrawing from it". On the appearance of Panzani Charles Plowden had declared that "the work discloses more than the author meant to tell .. he and the party, which he serves, had carried their plan of schism further than we suspected, and the day may be near, when they will publicly take the Oath of Supremacy and elect a B(isho)p for theirselves". [2.] The Reasons form just such a "plan of schism" and follow closely the argument of Panzani. In twenty-one paragraphs Berington sets out the Cisalpine grievances against the Vicars, and

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1. Throck. Mss. Gate Box, Folder 7. Loose paper.

2. A.A.W., C. Plowden to Douglass, June 1st 1793. Throck.Mss. Gate Box Folder 7. "Reasons for altering our Church Government, or for withdrawing from it"

his proposed solution. One by one he enumerates them - the original papal tyranny in imposing Vicars on a clergy which had repeatedly asked for "regular Bishops"; the 'intrusion' of Douglass and Gibson against the clergy's wishes in 1790; Wilkes' suspension; Douglass' refusal of faculties to Berington himself; and finally "the present case of Mr. C. Berington". He points to the possibility that the Vicars will extend their "system of tyranny", in which case "many learned & exemplary men may be reduced to beggary, congregations deprived of their favourite pastors, & families disturbed in their domestic comforts, by being refused such chaplains as are agreeable to them, or being deprived of them to whom they have been habituated". He denounces the system of Apostolic Vicars as uncanonical and tyrannical, providing no "Tribunal of appeal", the Vicars being "equal in jurisdiction", and Rome certain to "support their agents in the exercise of the power, it arbitrarily delegates to them". He calls upon "all our brethren, clergy & laity" to take the cause of their church into their own hands, & to establish such a form of government, as ancient discipline & the present practice of the best regulated churches shall point out to them". When this has been done "as the church of Rome is acknowledged to us to be the centre of Catholic union & its bishop to be the head of all the faithful" notification should be sent to the Pope and "agreeably to modern discipline" canonical Institution be requested for the Bishops which the clergy and laity shall already have "canonically chosen". Part of the plan is the chanelling of all communication with Rome through the British government, and an attempt to prevent any 'interference' by Rome in English Catholic affairs "but through such public channels, & under such limitations, as shall be legally sanctioned". And should this

plan be ignored by the clergy, and not acted upon before the expiration of "the present year", the signatories formally ".. withdraw our submission from a system, that can only continue to entail additional disgrace and oppression upon the professors of our religion, & which, violating all order and ecclesiastical decency, must stand to posterity .. an irreffragable (sic) monument to the domineering policy of the Roman court, of the spirit of its agents, & of the indifference, with which men, who call themselves Catholic Englishmen, can contemplate the degradation of their church, & cherish an avowed plan of tyranny and vexation".

The difference between Berington's declaration of schism and Sir John's is striking and significant. In Sir John's plan, the church is to be 'liberated' for the sake of the laity - that is, to demonstrate their allegiance to the State. For Berington, the motive is to restore "the discipline of ages". The stress on the government's right to regulate discipline is present even in Berington's paper, but it is far less central to his plan. The implications are clear enough; for Sir John and Lord Petre the rejection of Roman jurisdiction was a key to the franchise and civil rights: for Berington it was a means of restoring the rights "of the ancient British Church". At this point the divergence of interest between Berington and "the party he served" becomes clear, and from this point was to become more obvious. The disputes over the oath had marked that difference, but now the unlikely alliance between Whig peers and Paris doctors begins to dissolve. The lay Cisalpines were political men, and the politics of religion were increasingly to become Irish politics. The interests of men like Petre were destined to move away from the narrow round of disputes over church government.

The Reasons therefore represents a watershed for Cisalpinism, which from this point onwards becomes more and more clearly the concern of the clergy. The future battles of Cisalpinism were to be fought in the library, not in the political lobby or the grandee's closet.

But schism is schism, whatever its motives, and Berington's paper remains an extraordinary document, justifying all the worst fears and suspicions of friend and foe alike. In it all the worst tendencies of Cisalpinism to faction, to arrogance, and above all to unreality, are crystalized. Yet it is without a single signature. The blow for the liberties of the British Church was never struck. Exactly why is not clear, but certain possible explanations present themselves. Only a handful of Cisalpines would have been prepared to go so far as schism, and Berington and his patron must have known this well enough. It would never have worked, though conceivably Berington might have imagined that his cousin the Bishop would have taken a hand in this new 'Utrecht' church, in the event of his being set aside. It is of course possible that the document is the product of an impulse, soon repented of. Yet it is obviously a fair copy, and shows some marks of revision, which means that the impulse must have lasted a long time. Most plausibly, the document may never have been intended to bring about a schism, but only to threaten one in order to gain concessions - and this theory is supported by the "deadline" set before the schism takes effect. Whatever the purpose of the paper, it was never used. Schism remained a mere spectre to haunt the orthodox. For 1796 witnessed more concrete diversions and alarums; the march of Napoleon on the Papal States sparked off a series of events which were to engage the attention of the Cis-alpines and orthodox alike, and to lead to a reconciliation between

Berington and Douglass. That uneasy peace did not last, but by the time it broke down the moment for schisms, and threats of schisms, had passed; it never came again.

CHAPTER V

"Joseph Berington and the English Cisalpine Movement,

1772 - 1803".

Retreat

"The abjuration of error ... is at all times a painful task..". [1.]

"... let there be an end". [2.]

The year 1796 was full of portent both for the church universal, and for its 'little platoon' in England. Bonaparte's march through Italy seemed to threaten the Papacy with the fall which Berington had so complacently forecast.[3] The refugee hordes of bedraggled French clergy gave point and substance to the general unease.[4] "We partake of the calamities of the time", wrote Milner, "and we are doomed, I fear, to experience them still more heavily. I never see a French priest in his tattered coat and with his starved visage but I think that his fate will certainly be mine, nay I cannot get it out of my head, that we shall many of us experience still worse treatment."[5] The Bampton lecturer for 1796 pressed home the parallels between the calamities afflicting the church abroad, and those in England. Talking of the "circle of supremacy" "fast contracting to the verge of a wretched territory", and the "expiring pretensions of an antichristian vanity" he praised Berington, Geddes, and Throckmorton who had "at length considered themselves as enfranchised from (Rome's) spiritual domination".[6] The case of Bishop Berington, obstinate in his refusal to bow to the orthodox yoke, and give the "full and open satisfaction" demanded by Rome, brought the universal ills even nearer home.[7] From Buckland

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1. Robert Plowden, A Letter to a Roman Catholic Clergyman upon Theological Inaccuracy. (London 1795), p.167.

2. B.A.A., c.1589, J. Berington to J. Kirk, Feb.18th, 1800.

3. Berington, Panzani, preface.

4. Dawn, II, pp.1-36, 115-129, 163-175.

5. A.A.W., Milner to Douglass, Sept.21st, 1796.

6. Robert Gray, Sermons on the Principles upon which the Reformation of the Church of England was established, Bampton Lectures for 1796. (Oxford 1796), pp.306-309.

7. A.A.W., Milner to Douglass, May 4th 1796.

rumours circulated that Berington's "Decline and Fall" of the Papacy was almost ready, and he was "on the point of attacking the Pope in his strongholds". [1.] The Vicars girded themselves for battle. Late in 1795 Robert Plowden had published a Letter.. upon Theological Inaccuracy, which had the effect of inflaming the Vicars' zeal. In an attempt to clarify the meaning of the Oath in 1790 a group of Cisalpine clergy had verbally approved a proposition stating that the Church had power "not to regulate by any outward coaction civil and temporal concerns of subjects and citizens, but to direct souls by persuasion in the concerns of eternal salvation". This proposition, with the names of the clergy who approved it, appeared as Appendix IX of the third Blue Book. Plowden now claimed that it denied the power of the Church to absolve sins or to impose ecclesiastical censures: in support he quoted the Bull Auctorem Fidei's condemnation of similar propositions from the Synod of Pistoia. [2.] Plowden also condemned the "Staffordshire Creed" as contradictory to Catholic Faith". [3.] Whatever the force of his arguments against the Staffordshire Creed, Plowden's attack on the Blue Book propositions was a wanton reopening of old sores; James Archer described it as "a very stupid but in my opinion malicious pamphlet". [4.] But the Vicars were in a warlike mood: they had already pored over the Bull Auctorem for its condemnation of positions "more or less analagous to the Throckmorton & Staffordshire clergy's doctrine". Plowden's book roused them to action. Most of the 'Blue Book clergy'

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1. A.A.W., Milner to Douglass, January 10th, 1796.

2. R. Plowden, op.cit., pp.1ff, 28-32. The clergy who approved the Blue Book proposition were Charles Berington, Peter Brown, William Strickland, Joseph Wilkes, Arthur O'Leary, Thomas Meynell, Thomas Rigby, Charles Bellasys, Thomas Hussey and James Archer.

3. ibid., p.33ff.

4. A.A.W., James Archer to Bishop Douglass, Nov.26th, 1796.

were in Douglass' district, and he set about persuading them to retract, urged on by Bishop Walmesley. [1] In July Douglass visited the Middle District and the Staffordshire Clergy and urged them to retract their "heretical" creed; he also asked for their neutrality in the attempts to unseat Bishop Berington. [2] But Joseph Berington had been busy rallying his colleagues, encouraging them to "speak out as (they) can", and Douglass' efforts were unavailing. John Kirk informed him that the Staffordshire creed was ill-worded, not heretical, and that "should any violent measures be taken with (Bishop Berington) it is impossible his deposition should be tamely acquiesced in. Meetings must take place ... and steps be taken". [3]

The hardening of orthodox attitudes was marked in August by the determination first of Walmesley and then of Gibson to refuse faculties to the Blue Book clergy should they enter their districts. [4] Bishop Berington himself had grown increasingly bitter towards his episcopal colleagues and the fickle Erskine for their attempts to discredit him at Rome, and in April Erskine and Throckmorton had openly quarrelled over the Baronet's patronage of Joseph Berington. [5] The general worsening of relations between Cisalpine and orthodox, became increasingly focused on "our modern Abeillard", whose fellow Staffordians were now thought of as "the Berington faction". [6] Two

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1. A.A.W., Walmesley to Douglass, March 2nd 1795.
2. A.A.W., Kirk to Douglass, July 16th, 1796.
3. B.A.A., c.1355, Berington to Kirk, July 10th, 1796.
4. Clifton, Walmesley to Douglass, and Gibson, August 15th, 1796.
   Gibson to Walmesley, Sept.24th, 1796.
   James Sharrock to Walmesley, Oct.18th, 1796.
   Walmesley to Sharrock, Oct.15th, 1796.
5. Clifton, Douglass to Walmesley, n.d. received April 14th,1796
   Same to same, April 22nd, 1796.
6. A.A.W., Coombes to Douglass, July 12th 1796.

events in particular turned orthodox attention to Berington. During an election at Preston a group of Catholic laymen calling themselves "the enlightened Catholics" took the Oath of supremacy: remembering Berington's invitation in Panzani, the orthodox not unnaturally laid the blame for the "grand defection" on his shoulders.[1.] In London a pamphlet addressed to the French refugee clergy appeared, praising the schismatical Constitutional clergy, and whose anti-papal tone persuaded Milner and others, wrongly, that Berington was the author.[2.] Then in August came reports from Italy that the advance of Napoleon had roused the Deity to action. A Madonna at Ancona had been observed to wink, and her example spread to others in the surrounding district, and eventually to Rome itself. Bishop Douglass, a moderate and sensible man, seemed to accept the miracles at face value, and painstakingly recorded every piece of information he could glean on the subject. A typical entry in his diary runs - "Rome is become a Ninevah for works of penance, Sermons in the open squares of the city and Processions ... seven Jews and one English Protestant have been converted".[3.] Early in September a pamphlet of eye-witness reports appeared. It met with a mixed response. Milner declared himself an 'entire convert', but the lay leaders of the Moorfields

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1. A.A.W. Gibson to Douglass, June 7th 1796.
B.A.A. c.1355 Berington to Kirk, July 10th, 1796.
Clifton, Gibson to Walmesley, June 11th, 1796. Several of the Preston jurors were, it seems, intoxicated, and most of them ultimately 'recanted' in the Catholic chapel at Preston.

2. Considerations addressed to the French Bishops and Clergy now residing in England. (London 1796). I have been unable to trace a copy of this work.
A.A.W. Walmesley to Douglass, May 15th, 1796. The author was in fact a French Constitutional priest living in London - Douglass Diary

3. D.D., 24th August 1796.

congregation refused to allow the sale of the pamphlet at their chapel. [1.] J. C. Eustace referred scornfully to the "miraculous winking, consolatory weeping, and efficacious frowning of so many statues who have thus forgot themselves into life ..." [2.] Milner was asked to write a preface on the miracles for a new edition of the pamphlet, and was about to comply when he received news that Berington had printed an attack on the Letters from Italy. It was, for Milner, a golden opportunity. He had long wanted an excuse to "humble our Proud Philosopher" [3.] and Berington's pamphlet provided just that. Seen in its true light, he told Douglass, the "venom" of Berington's attack on the miracles would "strike horror into every true Christian". [4.] He accordingly set about a reply which would expose the "irreligious" tendency of this and of all Berington's works, a tendency which undermined not only the Church but "the whole Christian system". Berington's pamphlet was indeed a tour de force in his ripest style. [5.] Dismissing the Catholicism of Italy as a compound of superstition and "paroxisms of enthusiasm", he suggested that the Pope, though himself disbelieving in the miracles, had with great "political prudence" made use of the folly of his people to "effect their greater good". The widespread belief in the miracles he attributed to the

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1. Miraculous Events established by Authentic Letters from Italy, (London 1796). The pamphlet was edited by George Bruning, a priest in Walmesley's district. One of Sir John Throckmorton's correspondents from Italy sent him an account of the Miracles, and Bruning asked him for an extract: the Baronet declined because "he objected to his name in such Publications". Clifton, Bruning to Walmesley, n.d. year 1796, letter 99.
D.D., Sept. 16th 1796.
A.A.W, Milner to Douglass, Sept.28th, 1796.
2. B.A.A., c.1408, J. C. Eustace to Kir, Oct.29th, 1797.
3. Farm Street, Milner to Plowden, Dec.30th, 1796.
4. A.A.W, Milner to Douglass, Oct.29th, Dec.9th, 1796.
5. J. Berington, An Examination of Events termed Miraculous, as reported in Letters from Italy. (London 1796)

'contagion' of enthusiasm, and he systematically explained away each piece of alleged evidence in terms of hallucination, wishful thinking, and even bribery. The main plank of the argument was simple. Italians were superstitious, and the 'miracles' tended to strengthen their superstition. Ergo, no matter how plausible the evidence, they could not be from God. "I now look for a man who will be hardy enough to maintain that the Deity can patronise superstition!". In favour of this accusation of Italian idol-worship, he cited "those enlightened men", Scipio Ricci and the Tuscan bishops. He asserted categorically that the perpetuity of miracles was unnecessary for the defence of the Christian system, and allowed, or seemed to allow, only the miracles of primitive times to be real. He concluded by declaring his motive in writing, "I write to convince our Protestant brethren, that Catholics are as free as they in the discussion of all points (and) .. to check .. the attempts of men who ... are labouring to impress on the minds of English Catholics a belief in prodigies, and to disfigure their religion with the abuses of image-worship". [1.]

He had provided his opponents with ample rope for a lynching, and Plowden and others urged Milner to proceed to a speedy execution. Indeed Walmesley was apparently thinking in terms of something more than a mere reply: "Are there no means of stopping Jos.Berington's pen?" he asked Douglass.[2.] Milner thought there were. In the aftermath of Berington's pamphlet Douglass had considered the necessity

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1. ibid., pp.201, 25, 27, 28, 30.

2. Walmesley to Douglass, Nov.6th, 1796.

of suspending him, and had mentioned this to Milner. He in turn suggested that his denunciation would "smooth the way, and lessen the odium of such a step.." since Douglass' action would then appear as a response to Milner's denunciation. Milner's magnanimous offer was never to be taken up. Douglass had a strong dislike of the sort of ecclesiastical heavy artillery Milner was asking him to deploy.[1] On the same day that Milner wrote offering his broad shoulders to bear the 'odium' of a condemnation of the 'Proud Philosopher', Douglass wrote to Berington himself. The letter would not have pleased Milner. Berington's views on the perpetuity of miracles had disturbed Douglass but, he wrote, "Hoping still that you do not mean what an unguarded pen seems to express, I beg of you to send me an answer to the two following questions.

1st: Is the testimony of the senses .. sufficient grounds for a person to believe that a miracle has been wrought?

2nd: Do you believe that miraculous powers continue in the Catholic Church?"[2]

Douglass, then, was willing to allow Berington a certain space in which to manoeuvre. Berington himself does not seem to have viewed the matter in this light, and his reply strikes a note of injured innocence. He could hardly believe, he wrote, that anyone could find his pamphlet other than cool and temperate. To both Douglass's questions he replied in the affirmative, though he still maintained that miracles added nothing to the evidence of Christianity. The letter ends in a harsh outburst of resentment against the four years he had spent without faculties. Douglass had said that the pamphlet had 'hurt' Berington's

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1. A.A.W., Milner to Douglass, Dec.9th, 1796.
2. A.A.W., Draft., Douglass to Berington, Dec.9th, 1796.

character as a priest. The ferocity of the reply reveals Berington's sense of the ignominy of his position. "I did not think I had any character left ... You at least have long treated me as totally devoid of character ... notwithstanding the friendly conclusion of your letter ... your behaviour to me has been uncanonical, unmerited and cruel". [1.] What Douglass thought of this protest does not appear; he recorded without comment the receipt of the letter, and, for the time being, the matter rested there.

There was far more involved here than the misdemeanours of a single priest. Events were moving towards an open clash between Vicars and Cisalpines: in Berington's pamphlet the tensions which had been mounting all year found a focus. Milner had long since attributed "half the irreligion of our people" to Berington's "uncondemned and unconfuted doctrine". [2.] Round him, therefore, the hawks began to gather. But the orthodox were not agreed on tactics. In October Douglass informed Walmesley that he had received verbal assurances of the orthodoxy of the 'Blue Book clergy' and intended to pursue the matter no further "lest ... the fire of discord be again kindled up in this town". [3.] The Western Vicar was not pleased, and notified Douglass sharply that in his district at least they were to consider themselves under a censure. [4.] Douglass' failure to condemn Berington for his pamphlet on the miracles revealed more clearly the opposing policies of Douglass

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1. A.A.W., Berington to Douglass, Dec.12th, 1796.
2. A.A.W., Milner to Douglass, Jan.10th, 1796.
3. Clifton, Douglass to Walmesley, October 31st, 1796.
4. Clifton, Walmesley to Douglass, Nov.6th, 1796.

and the other Vicars. Gibson and Walmesley agreed that some "public censure" of Berington was called for, and Walmesley announced his intention of providing one in his Lenten pastoral. [1.] The Vicars' huntsmen, Milner, Charles Plowden, and Pilling, procured a reprint of Berington's Douay theses with the aim of circulating this early example of his heterodoxy. Douglass strongly condemned the "malicious act" - "What is become of prudence and common sense?". [2.] On this test case therefore, the Vicars were divided; all agreed that something must be done, but Douglass, Berington's immediate superior, was unwilling to revive old grievances, and resentful of the "jostling" of fireaters like Walmesley and Milner.

In January 1797 Milner's Serious Expostulation with the Rev. Joseph Berington appeared. [3.] Its general line of argument is clear from what has already been said, and it is sufficient to note here that it contained, in addition to an attack on the Examination, passages from other works by Berington which Milner, like Plowden five years earlier, denounced. Milner did not have all the books he was condemning to hand, and borrowed passages for denunciation piecemeal from Plowden's work. [4.] The action betrays Milner's arbitrary approach and his sweeping disregard for the context of a passage. The Expostulation moreover, contained downright misrepresentation. In Panzani Berington had written "nor is it necessary I should say (meaning "it is obvious") that as he only can confer orders who has been himself ordained, so he only can confer jurisdiction who

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1. Leeds, Walmesley to Gibson, Dec.27th, 1796

2. Leeds, Douglass to Gibson, Dec.23rd, 1796
   Upholland, Bannister to Rutter, Nov.16th, 1796
   A.A.W., D.D., January 16th, 1797.

3. J. Milner A Serious Expostulation with the Rev.Joseph Berington upon his Theological Errors concerning Miracles .. (London 1797)

4. Farm Street, Milner to Plowden, Dec.30th, 1796

is himself .. possessed of jurisdiction".[1] The sense of this is clear enough - no-one can give what he has not. But in quoting this Milner so transformed the passage as to invert its meaning. In his version it becomes "It is not necessary, that as he only can confer orders.."!![2] Milner concluded by urging Berington to "avow that you are no longer a .. Catholic, hoist your own standard, and frame any creed you please". For good value, he dealt a blow in passing to Bishop Berington, taunting his cousin Joseph that though he had "found a prelate to afford (him) a certain degree of countenance and support" that prelate himself was in "a singular situation in consequence of his erronious doctrines", and the "inflexible orthodoxy of the Church requires at his hands an ample and public retraction of the same".[3] Writing to Plowden, Milner informed him that Walmesley was eager for the pamphlet to appear, but that Douglass though "far from being averse to it ... appears afraid of going greater lengths with his redoubted adversary".[4] It was as he feared. Although Walmesley duly censured Berington in his Lenten Pastoral, Douglass had decided on less warlike measures, and on 11th February, the day after Walmesley's Pastoral appeared, he once more wrote to Berington. With admirable charity he ignored the acrimony of Berington's previous letter, and made us of "the style of intreaty". He asked Berington, not for a retraction, but for a pamphlet "which may do away the scandal that has been given by many passages in your writing". He went on to suggest that if Berington were disposed "to yield to my entreaty, let me

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1. Panzani, p.292
2. Expostulation, p.75
3. ibid., pp.124-128
4. Farm Street, Milner to Plowden, Dec.30th, 1796

know the sooner the better and we will endeavour to agree upon a mode which may be the least painful to the writer...".[1.] Berington rose to the occasion and declared his willingness, then as always, to give Douglass "or any other person who should call on me in a friendly and well-intentioned manner, every satisfaction in my power, on anything I have ever written". He asked Douglass to discuss the form of satisfaction with Sir John Throckmorton who was then in town.[2.] It was agreed that Berington should publish a pamphlet explaining the passages cited in Plowden's and Milner's attacks, though he refused to mention either of them by name, since the matter was between himself and Douglass. At the end of the pamphlet Douglass was to append a declaration that Berington's faith was "pure and orthodox". This clause of the agreement was behind Berington's willingness to compromise, for it would "(tie) his lordship down to something, that is, total amnesty, in his regard, of all that is passed ..".[3.] Douglass asked him to state after his explanation of particular passages that there remained "many other passages .. open to censure, and may be seen as .. tending to promote schism". This attempt to get Berington to submit himself unreservedly to the judgement of others would have been a considerable gain for the orthodox side, since it would have represented a complete capitulation by the most prolific and best known Cisalpine author, but Berington declined to oblige. "Certainly I shall not say <u>that</u>".[4.] His refusal was not altogether unreasonable, since an admission that his works contained "many passages tending to promote schism" would

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1. A.A.W. Douglass to Berington, Feb.11th, 1797
2. A.A.W. Berington to Douglass, Feb.12th, 1797
3. <u>Throck.Mss.</u> Berington to Sir John Throckmorton, Feb.17th,1797
4. A.A.W., Berington to Douglass, Feb.16th, 1797.

leave him open to attack in the future, especially as the passages were not specified. At any rate, the negotiations proceeded, Douglass declaring that Berington had "made (him) happy", and making another request. This was no less than that Berington should "abstain from writing anymore".[1.]

He could hardly have hoped for this much, and Berington certainly had no intention of complying, though he did not refuse point-blank. On 26th February he sent his manuscript to Douglass. It should be read, he wrote, "as coming from me ... I can say that I am sorry, but I cannot say it in a canting manner, or that would be thought canting, if I used it".[2.] Indeed he had not done so. The pamphlet retracted none of his main positions, and attributed the general belief in his heterodoxy to a persecution inaugurated by his dismissal from Douay in 1772. He explained that in all his writings he had aimed at dispelling protestant prejudice and therefore relinquishing all "Scholasticism and subtle disputation" stated Catholic doctrines "in the plain language of the day". To this "verbal departure from the phraseology of the ancient schools", though not from the "line of truth", the charges of unorthodoxy must be attributed. Douglass had asked him to include and sign the Creed of Pius IV; instead Berington had given a general assent, only specifying the articles on the Church and the Pope. "I wished not to supply the malevolent", he explained, "any handle for proclaiming, that, if you had not thought me out of the Church, would you have

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1. A.A.W., Douglass to Berington, Feb.17th,1797. Clearly an attempt to suppress Berington's History of the Papacy, which had caused great anxiety among the orthodox. Berington had concluded his pamphlet on the miracles with an announcement of this book's imminent publication; in fact he had decided not to publish, perhaps in order to avoid jeapordizing his Cousin's chances of making peace with Rome - Gentleman's Magazine, 65, p.637

2. A.A.W., Berington to Douglass, Feb.26th, 1797.

required me to do that which is done on the readmission of people to the communion of the Church". He added reassuringly, though, that what he had done was "the same in itself only not so formal...".[1.]

On 2nd March, Douglass sat down to annotate the manuscript. Berington had dealt with thirteen propositions taken from his works. Douglass' notes revealed that he found only one of the explanations totally satisfactory.[2.] A few of his objections relate directly to the doctrinal substance of the propositions, particularly those dealing with Papal and episcopal jurisdiction, and the right of local churches to alter discipline. On the whole, however, his comments are of a different sort. Some examples are "... on religious subjects accuracy required ...", "... sound form of words ...", "... not sufficient precision", "vague expressions leave prejudices". Douglass was no zealot for precision, but the pressures on him to tame Berington left him little choice, and in any case his patience was beginning to wear thin. Against Berington's claim that he could not understand the difficulty in retracting errors, Douglass scrawled angrily, "Do it then ...". Some of Douglass' insistence on accuracy derived from his Grand Vicar James Barnard. He had been brought into the negotiations as Douglass' adviser at an early stage, with Berington's full approval. A letter from Barnard to Berington written after he had examined the manuscript reveals his conviction

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1. J. Berington, A Letter to the Right Reverend John Douglass. (London 1797)

2. D.D., March 2nd, 1797.
A.A.W., A.47/23, Douglass' Mss. notes.

that although "not every proposition taught in the schools is an article of Faith; yet ... every ... doctrine universally taught in the ancient schools is so closely connected with some article of Faith that it is impossible to depart from the phraseology of the proposition without either departing from, or at least doing some violence to that article itself...". Barnard rigorously demanded that Berington should make an "absolute and unlimited retraction", and sign the creed of Pius IV. [1.]

Douglass eventually wrote to Berington less severely than either his own notes on the manuscript, or Barnard's advice, might have led one to expect. He made two demands. Berington had written that he was sorry <u>if</u> his works had caused scandal. This 'if' had to go. Secondly, Berington was once more asked to sign the Creed of Pius IV. He refused both demands. His reason for declining the first was that it admitted too much; he had, he declared, never met anyone who had been in the slightest harmed by his writings. The reason he now offered for his refusal to sign the Creed is more interesting. "You compel me to give you the secret of my mind", he told Douglass. "I have a great difficulty to the <u>damning clause</u> in the conclusion ... "This true catholic faith" are the words "without which no one can be saved". [2.] Douglass was adamant. He informed Sir John that he and Barnard thought the alteration and

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1. A.A.W., Barnard to Berington, n.d. (A47/20). Barnard's zeal may not be unconnected with the fact that he had written a biography of Benedicte Joseph Labre, whom Berington had slighted as "hardly a Catholic" in his pamphlet on the miracles.

2. A.A.W., Berington to Douglass, March 9th, 1797.

the creed "essentially requisite" and in his diary recorded that "... all treaty for a reconcilliation is broken off". [1.] Berington responded by announcing his intention of publishing his pamphlet with notes, extracts from correspondence, and a preface which could explain the whole transaction and show "how disposed I was to come into every reasonable measure". This was something of a trump card. Such a publication would be a considerable embarrassment to Douglass, whose concessions and conciliatory attitude during the negotiations would appear as treason to the orthodox. [2.] Accordingly, Douglass and Sir John met once more and Berington offered a compromise solution. He would agree to sign the Creed if he were allowed to add a note on the sense in which he understood it; as for the 'if', though he insisted on its retention, he agreed to insert after the clause containing the offending conditional, another clause to the effect that <u>since</u> Douglass assures him that scandal <u>has</u> been taken, he "regrets it has so happened". [3.] Douglass accepted the latter suggestion, but stood fast on the Creed. "One, if not the principal cause of Mr. Berington's misfortunes has been his wish to accommodate his language to the persuasion of our wandering brethren". The ideas of an explanatory note, he added, deeply shocked him. "Never let a Catholic Priest refuse to make the profession of Faith in the terms of a Creed which the Catholic world receives". [4.] The tone of Sir John's reply once again illustrates the different conceptions of what was going on, entertained by orthodox and Cisalpines.

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1. A.A.W., Douglass to Sir John Throckmorton, March 12th, 1797
   D.D., March 18th, 1797
2. <u>Throck.Mss</u>.,Berington to Throckmorton, March 17th,1797
3. A.A.W., Sir John Throckmorton to Douglass, March 23rd 1797
4. A.A.W., Douglass to Throckmorton, March 24th,1797
   The note was to the effect that the damning clause applied only to those who obstinately and knowingly denied the Catholic Faith.

He attributed Douglass' truculence to a "too implicit acquiescence in Mr. Barnard's prejudices". Barnard had turned the negotiations from "an amicable adjustment of differences" to "a scholastic punctilious disputation upon words". Reluctantly, however, he agreed on Berington's behalf to the insertion of the Creed without the note, though "it was what he (Berington) was entitled to ask, and what, consistently with that deference which is due from one gentleman to another, ought not to have been refused". [1]

The negotiations were at last drawing to a close. Douglass had agreed to add a note to the printed letter to the effect that Berington's faith was "pure and orthodox". On 30th March he sent a draft of his note to Sir John, for Berington's approval. He was not to receive it. His note contained the statement that Berington's explanations were "in some instances very satisfactory, tho' not so in others". Clearly Douglass was not altogether happy about the compromise that had been effected, and he may have anticipated a hostile reaction from Milner, Barnard, and others, if he gave Berington an unqualified absolution from the charges brought against him. At any rate Berington was furious. "Never was a man so grossly insulted". He pointed to his concessions, "one of which has given me great pain, and the other in strict truth I should not have allowed.." and asked why the unsatisfactory passages had not been mentioned earlier. His letter ends in fury: "I am truly too much irritated to proceed ... your letter I positively reject". [2]

The truth was that the sort of 'accomodation' that had been

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1. A.A.W, Sir John to Douglass, March 25th,1797

2. A.A.W,, Douglass to Throckmorton, March 30th,1797
Berington to Douglass, March 31st,1797.

aimed at by one side, and reluctantly entered into by the other, was becoming increasingly impossible in a situation in which the limits both of orthodoxy and of episcopal authority were matters of growing concern. The English Catholic Church was attempting to define itself, in a complex environment for which it possessed no precedents. The Vicars sought a settlement in terms of the submission of the enemy; Douglass, for all his gentleness, was well aware that no solution which left the absolute authority of the Vicars in doubt, or which seemed to condone in any way the rebellion of the Cisalpines, could hope to satisfy his confreres and advisers. The sort of independence aimed at by Berington and his fellow Cisalpines militated against such a consolidation of authority. Douglass felt the incompatibility, as his attempt to stop short of an actual approval of Berington's orthodoxy reveals. But he was not the man to stamp out opposition in the way that his episcopal brethren and their advisers urged. So it was in this case; the offending note was rewritten, and the pamphlet, with Douglass' approbation, appeared on 16th April 1797. It was Easter Sunday. [1.]

Despite that happy omen, the pamphlet satisfied no-one. Milner called it "this shabby business, this delusive and hollow pacification", and considered that Douglass' action had driven a wedge between himself and the other Vicars. [2.] Walmesley only a month before, had condemned Berington's works, and the 'reconciliation' seemed to have reflected on him. Indeed, on hearing the first rumours of the negotiations he had declared that if Berington did not give a full 'recantation', "I don't see how he can be looked upon as a Catholic". His reaction to the

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1. D.D., April 16th, 1797

2. Farm Street, Milner to Plowden, May 8th, 1797.

final settlement was grim - "I wish your Lordship may not have reason to repent of this affair", and elsewhere he expressed the opinion that Douglass had "deserted the faith of his fathers!". [1.] Gibson in the Northern district, though aware that Douglass' motive had been a laudable desire for peace, regretted the transaction, and was gloomy about its probable consequences. [2.] Robert Bannister, Gibson's Grand Vicar, wrote a stern letter of rebuke to Douglass, comparing Berington to the Nestorians, Calvin, Luther, and the Bishop of Pistoia and he demanded Berington's excommunication. [3.] Bishop Sharrock, Walmesley's coadjutor in the Western district, confessed himself "much hurt". [4.] Douglass himself felt that he had conceded too much, but honourably stood by his action. Not even Berington was happy. The printed letter, he told John Kirk, was "not exactly what I wished to give; but I was obliged to accomodate myself to the sentiments of Mr. D.". [5.]

The equivocal nature of Berington's 'retraction' deepened the orthodox conviction that stern measures were required when dealing with such "crafty men". The victory, it seemed, had gone to the unrighteous: Douglass had been duped. [6.] Douglass himself informed

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1. A.A.W., Walmesley to Douglass, April 28th,1797
Same to same, May 5th,1797
Milner to Douglass, August,1810. This is the notorious abusive letter quoted in Ward, The Eve of Catholic Emancipation (London 1911) I, pp.151-2.

2. A.A.W., Gibson to Douglass, May 8th, 1797

3. A.A.W., Bannister to Douglass, Nov.15th, 1797
Greenway to Douglass, Nov.26th, 1797
c.f., also Preston Record Office, Barrow Papers, RC CL/60, Barrow to Douglass, Dec.3rd, 1797

4. A.A.W., Sharrock to Douglass, April 10th, 1798.

5. B.A.A., c.1389, Berington to Kirk, April 22nd, 1797

6. Clifton, Leeds, Milner to Walmesley, April 28th, 1797
Walmesley to Gibson, May 18th, 1797.

Rome of his proceedings, and was comforted in the face of so much criticism by a letter from there approving his peacemaking.[1.] But for all that, his action had created more tensions than it resolved, and orthodoxy itself was divided. Determined that not all Zion's watchmen should be thought to sleep, Bishop Walmesley published on June 3rd an Address to the clergy of his district, excommunicating the entire Catholic Committee for their signatures of the "protest and Appeal" in the Second Blue Book, and suspending the 'Blue Book Clergy' and the Staffordshire clergy from the exercise of any functions in his district.[2.] This was a blow not only at the delinquents in question, but at the unfortunate Douglass, to whose district all the 'Blue Book Clergy' belonged, and who had already accepted their verbal explanations of the proposition Walmesley condemned. The attack on the Staffordshire clergy, too, reflected on Douglass, for although Berington no longer lived in Staffordshire, he was well known to be the author of the Staffordshire publications. Somewhat testily Douglass rejected Walmesley's hint that he might join in the condemnation - "I choose another line of conduct".[3.]

The reconciliation between Douglass and Berington bore other bitter fruit. Milner nursed a strong sense of grievance against Douglass; he considered that the Bishop's action had made the publication of his Serious Expostulation appear as a private act of spite,

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1. Leeds, Milner to Gibson, August 3rd, 1797
2. Dawn, II pp.145-148
3. A.A.W.,47/59 Walmesley to Douglass, n.d. (June 1797) enclosing the address.

instead of the defence of orthodoxy he had planned. Moreover, Bishop Berington had laid a formal complaint against Milner's slighting references to himself in that work; Douglass had received the complaint and had refused Milner a chance to reply to the Bishop's accusations. Milner considered himself 'condemned' by Douglass, and the feeling 'drove' him from the Bishop's 'service' - he told James Sharrock that since the Church had "lately turn'd him off" he would "employ his pen on other subjects than he has hitherto". [1.] The breach was patched up, but Douglass refused to discuss the Berington affair with Milner, and on hearing that Walmesley was urging Rome to replace Bishop Berington with Milner he protested. "Mr. M's zeal for the cause of orthodoxy .. is of so inflexible a temper that he may not bear & forebear, he may not conciliate the good will of the clergy & people...". [2.]

If the orthodox were at war among themselves, the Cisalpines were wholly of one mind. Berington's 'reconciliation' with Douglass had raised hopes of a lasting peace; Walmesley's action shattered them rudely. Thomas Southworth expressed the resentment of all the Staffordshire men: "I do not like my Lord of Rama: nor to be effaced .. from the lists of Catholicity, & excluded from everlasting life". [3.] They requested Walmesley to specify the "various errors and heretical doctrine" he alleged against them. Walmesley, declaring the Appeal to the Catholics of England "one continued

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1. A.A.W., 4/2/97 Bp. Berington to Douglass, Preston Record Office, Coghlan Papers, RC BU/14. J. Sharrock to Peter Coghlan, Oct. 16th, 1797

2. Leeds, Milner to Gibson, August 3rd, 1797
Douglass to Gibson, Sept.11th, 1797

3. Throck. Mss., Gate-box 8/15. Thomas Southworth to (?), n.d.

sequel of error"(sic) nevertheless listed three heretical propositions. Two of these were quibbles, which could only be considered erroneous by placing a very strained interpretation on them; the strength of his case rested on the proposition that the Pope was "supreme in Spirituals by divine appointment, Supreme in Discipline by Ecclesiastical Institution,[1.] On October 18th, 1797 the surviving Staffordshire clergy published the Exposition of our Sentiments, addressed to Walmesley, granting that the disputed clause was inaccurately expressed, but denying the charge of heresy, and explaining the sense in which "we always have, and do understand it".[2.] This was something of a feat, for the fact is that even Berington, who had composed the 'Creed', was uncertain of its meaning. At the height of his opposition to Douglass in 1796, indeed, the period at which the Buckland "deed of schism" was probably composed, he had offered Kirk an interpretation which seemed to justify Walmesley's charges. The proposition "Supreme in discipline" was indeed heretical, claimed Berington, for it conceded far too much. General Councils, not the Pope, were alone supreme in any sense. The Pope was subject to the canons in all matters of discipline. Nor was this all. "What is meant by the word Spiritual in the proposition of the Staffordshire clergy,

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1. A Short, Plain Statement of Facts (by the Staffordshire clergy) (Wolverhampton 1798) pp.11-14.
Rowlands, The Staffordshire Clergy, in Recusant History IX, p.234-5.

2. Short and Plain Statement, pp.14-19. This was signed by John Carter, John Corne, Thomas Southworth, James Tasker, Edward Eyre, John Roe and John Kirk. Berington deleted his name at the proof stage, but eventually allowed it to appear. The other six members of the original 'cabal' had either died before 1797, or retracted. - Recusant History, IX, p.234.

I do not understand. All the power of the pope, as head of the church, seems purely ecclesiastical. What is spiritual is common to him & to other bishops & priests, such as the right of preaching ...". Berington allowed the Pope a divine commission as Head, of the Church but "the exercise of that headship or primacy of jurisdiction is subordinate in all things to the canons". To allow more than this was "palpable heresy". [1.] This explanation, so characteristic in Berington's puzzlement over his own writings, and in its extremism, recalls an earlier 'suspect' passage in Reflections. There he had said that the Church was independent of the Pope "excepting where it has pleased the community, for the sake of unity and good order, to surrender into his hands a limited superintendence". [2.] Taken together, the two passages suggest that the 'Creed' allowed the pope a mere titular primacy, to which the 'course of ages' had attached jurisdiction and powers which were, however, revokable. This was precisely the sense in which Walmesley understood and condemned it. But whatever Berington's original intentions when he composed the 'Creed' in 1791, or his feelings on the matter in 1796 while without faculties, in 1797, his faith declared "pure and orthodox", the case was altered. Dr. Bew, indeed, offered the Staffordians an interpretation of the proposition conveying "nearly the same sense" in which Walmesley had condemned it, [3.]

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1. B.A.A., c.1360, Berington to Kirk, August 9th, 1796
2. Reflections, pp.68-70
3. Throck.Mss., Gate Box 8/15, Thomas Southworth to (?), n.d.

but Berington put forward a more conciliatory gloss, and this his colleagues duly adopted as the Exposition of our sentiments. The offending proposition, he conceded, was not "accurately expressed", but its meaning was orthodox. "Under the word spirituals we comprise all those points, whether of faith, morality or discipline, over which at all times, the Roman Bishop has been acknowledged to hold, by the institution of Christ, a primacy of jurisdiction: by discipline .. we mean whatever .. has been conceded to him, and by virtue of that concession, exercised by him". [1.] This moderation did not however represent a change of mind - only a week after his reconciliation with Douglass Berington had predicted the imminent 'extinction' of the Papacy and declared that "the sooner this happens the better", [2.] a wish that hardly bespeaks a zeal for the prerogatives of Rome! The Exposition therefore should be understood not as capitulation, but as Cisalpine compromise for the sake of peace. But there was no peace. Walmesley, now a dying man, did not consider the Exposition satisfactory. He ordered his condemnation of the Staffordshire 'errors' to be published in the Laity's directory for 1798, and despite Bishop Douglass' efforts to have it suppressed, the condemnation duly appeared. [3.]

In November 1797 Walmesley died, leaving his successor and colleagues to cope with a legacy of strife and dissention. Bishop Sharrock decided that his predecessor's charges against the Staff-

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1. Short and Plain Statement, p.15.
2. B.A.A., c.1389, Berington to Kirk, April 22nd, 1797
3. A.A.W., D.D., October 23rd, 1797
   Dawn II, p.148

ordians should stand, and renewed the censure. The matter of the 'Blue Book clergy' however, was quietly dropped. [1.] Meanwhile, Bishop Berington became involved in the disputes. In October 1797 he had finally succumbed to the pressure of Cisalpines fearful of his replacement by zealots like Milner or Plowden, and of orthodox eager for admission of error, and signed a declaration withdrawing his signature from the Oath and the Blue Books, and renouncing "whatever evil, noxious or dangerous doctrines are contained in either the Books or the formula..". [2.] He had, however, prefaced the declaration with a lengthy explanation bristling with salvoes and conditions. Rome eventually accepted this, and confirmed him as Apostolic Vicar, but the process was so delayed that the Bishop died three days after his faculties arrived in England, and before they could be forwarded to him by Douglass. [3.] When Walmesley's censure was made public, Rome's verdict was not yet known, Bishop Berington was in an equivocal position, and deeply resentful of the shabby treatment he had received from Rome and the other Vicars. He penned a vigorous protest to Douglass ".. at seeing a respectable portion of the clergy of this District vilified & traduced in a pastoral letter of old Mr. Walmesley". All this, he claimed, was the work of men like Milner and Plowden who had "divided the clergy" and "got Rome on their side". His own persecution and now the attack on his clergy were merely the

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1. Dawn II, p.151.

2. Dawn II, pp.130-144. Sister Mary Cecily O.P. The Politico-Religious Problem, Ch.IV, for a detailed discussion of Bishop Berington's case.

3. Dawn, II, pp.152-4.

beginning - "Their next game will be to urge Rome to insist upon my persecuting Mr. Wilkes & the other Gentlemen of the Com(mittee) .. to withdraw their names from the blue books". [1.] On Sharrock's renewal of hostilities, Bishop Berington wrote to him, demanding 'redress' for the injured character of "the gentlemen". [2.] In all this the Bishop's cousin Joseph occupied an odd position. By signing the Exposition he had identified himself with the condemned Staffordians, yet his good standing in the London district and his "certificate of orthodoxy" from Douglass gave him a certain immunity. He now came forward as peacemaker, suggesting that Douglass should persuade Sharrock and Gibson to approve the Exposition, and reminding Douglass that ".. in stating my errors to me.. you omitted these three Propositions, now deemed so heterodox". [3.] Douglass indeed, needed no reminder - Gibson had already pointed out that unfortunate omission, and it was to prove an increasing embarrassment. However, Douglass did suggest to Sharrock "in the style of a Mediator" that as the Staffordians seemed willing to make concessions they should be treated mildly. Sharrock remained adamant, and Douglass eventually agreed that though Sharrock seemed to "outgo the zeal of (his) predecessor" some form of satisfaction was necessary. [4.] Bishop Gibson further complicated matters by approaching the Staffordshire clergy himself, and suggesting that a meeting of all parties should take place to discuss

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1. A.A.W., Bishop Berington to John Douglass, Nov.18th, 1797
2. A.A.W., Sharrock to Douglass, Dec.14th 1797
3. A.A.W., Joseph Berington to Douglass, Dec.1st, 1797
4. A.A.W., D.D., January 2nd, 1798
   Douglass to Sharrock, January 6th, 1798

the situation. The Staffordians declined. "My own Bishop does not suspect my orthodoxy" wrote John Kirk, "Who then have I to satisfy?". [1] The affair took on the appearance of a battle between the middle district on the one hand and the London, Western, and Northern Districts on the other. Bishop Berington wrote to Sharrock and Gibson, rebuking them for their interference in his district - "it is time we Bishops should attend to the concerns of our own Districts ..". He declared his intention of advising his clergy to content themselves with publishing the Exposition and Walmesley's "unparralleled letter" and "from that time ... not to permit themselves to be disturbed by any crimination or prosecution on that head". [2]

Crimination and prosecution were in the air. Bishop Gibson was intent on exacting a general retraction from the Staffordians: he also favoured a general campaign to force all the Committeemen to sign the formula which had been imposed on Bishop Berington, and of witholding the latter's faculties till the Committee and Staffordians had complied. [3] There were growing pressures on Douglass to go back on his agreement with Berington. Sharrock thought the Vicars should join in forcing a more satisfactory retraction from him than his pamphlet to Douglass, and it was more than once suggested that Douglass should require Berington to assent to the Papal brief condemning the Synod of Pistoia. Douglass did in fact broach the subject to Berington, but was slapped down with an exposition of

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1. Rowlands, Recusant History 9, p.236
2. Short and Plain Statement, pp.19-22
3. A.A.W. Gibson to Douglass, Feb.27th,1798
   Same to same, May 12th, 1798

the Rights of the Gallican church and the illegality of the Brief on the grounds of its violation of these rights.[1.] Berington refused even to consider complying with Sharrock's request for a further retraction. Douglass himself felt the strength of Berington's position, and at one point in the dispute contemplated publishing something "in favour" of him, to the dismay of the other Vicars.[2.]

In May 1798 Bishop Berington suggested that James Archer should draw up a formula which the bishop would then submit to the Staffordians as their canonical superior. Misunderstanding the request, however, Archer called in Bishop Douglass. The product of their joint exertions was moderate enough, but required that the Staffordians should "recall and retract .. certain propositions"; the most they were willing to do was to recall the one proposition they considered inaccurate.[3.] With the best of intentions Douglass acquainted the other Vicars with the formula, a course which made refusal difficult. "The misfortune now" wrote Joseph Berington, "is that from Douglass' precipitancy in sending it .. to the other bishops, we must also offend him".[4.] Both Berington and Bew, however, considered the formula must be refused, and the impasse continued. "How you will get us out of this scrape I cannot imagine" Berington told his cousin the bishop, and on May 26th he suggested

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1. A.A.W., Berington to Douglass, April 10th, 1798

2. A.A.W., Gibson to Douglass, March 26th, 1798
Sharrock to Douglass, May 11th, 1798

3. B.A.A., c.1478 Bp. Berington to Joseph Berington, May 23rd, 1798 (with postscript by Dr. Bew)
c.1479 Joseph Berington to Bp. Berington, May 24th, 1798
B.A.A., c.1546 (verso c.1478) Douglass/Archer formula.

4. B.A.A., c.1480 J. Berington to John Kirk, May 26th, 1798.

that the Staffordians should "come before the public" in a formal submission of their case to their own bishop. [1.] This the 'Junto' duly did: on 29th May John Thomas Southworth, John Roe and John Kirk met Bishop Berington at Long-Birch, laid before him the correspondence between themselves and Bishop Walmesley, and received his verbal declaration that he considered the Exposition completely satisfactory as a vindication of their "Faith and moral Conduct". [2.] He promised to embody his approval in a letter to be published by the Staffordians with the rest of the correspondence in the Case: before he could so so however, he "fell asleep in the Lord", and all hope for a quick end to the dispute died with him. [3.]

The death of Bishop Berington created new problems. Bishop Gibson as Senior Vicar Apostolic took upon himself to rule the district sede vacante. His authority was disputed by Dr. Bew, whom the late bishop had appointed Vicar General in April 1798. [4.] Bew's Cisalpinism was too well known for the orthodox to tolerate, and they declared his status as Vicar General invalid, since Bishop Berington's "extra-ordinary" faculties had not reached that prelate before his death. [5.] The Staffordshire clergy found themselves bereft of episcopal support, and they and their sympathisers were

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1. B.A.A., c.1480, J. Berington to John Kirk, May 26th, 1798
2. Short and Plain Statement, p.iii-iv.
3. ibid., p.v. Rowlands Recusant History 9, p.23.
4. Rowlands, Recusant History 9, p.237, Dawn II, p.155-6.
5. A.A.W., J. Berington to Douglass, Dec.24th, 1798.

haunted by the fear that the Vicars would recommend an orthodox die-hard to the vacant Vicariate. "God grant we may have no Jesuits or Milners". [1.]

To forestall so disastrous an event, Bew, Kirk and Edward Beaumont dispatched a circular to the clergy of the district, asking for their 'votes' for a successor to Berington, and recommending John Rigby, James Corne of Shrewsbury, or Bew himself. [2.] Douglass, to whom the 'votes' were to be forwarded, thoroughly disapproved of their procedure, as did the orthodox clergy in the Middle district itself. John Perry, himself a former member of the Staffordshire cabal but now a pillar of orthodoxy, articulated their fears and hopes in a letter to Douglass - "O my Lord, send us an Ambrose or a St. Charles Boromeus. Depend on it the temper of .. Staffordshire .. will not give way to mildness - Could I name, Mr. Milner would be the man". [3.] The Cisalpines, too, feared that Milner would be the man: Joseph Berington deplored the 'election' for that very reason. He urged Kirk to waive the rights of the clergy and acknowledge the hard realities of the case - Gibson and Douglass must be "humoured" unless the Staffordians wanted "the most obnoxious man, that a hostile & violent faction shall exultingly impose on you". [4.] In the event the 'election' came to nothing, and for a time it seemed that the worst had happened - unofficial reports from Rome named Milner as Propaganda's choice, and Milner himself

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1. B.A.A., c.1494, R. Beeston to Kirk, July 24th, 1798

2. Recusant History, 9, p.237
   Upholland, Bannister to Rutter, August 12th, 1798 (wrongly dated 1797?

3. Dawn, II, p.154
   Leeds, James Appleton of Chillington to Bishop Gibson, July 2nd, 1798
   A.A.W., John Perry to Douglass, June 9th, 1799

4. B.A.A., Berington to Kirk, July 10th, 1798

had high hopes for his 'promotion'. Nothing of the sort happened; the Middle District remained without a Bishop until November 1800, when Gregory Stapleton, President of Old Hall, was appointed. [1.]

In the meantime the four Staffordshire clergy fought on. They were joined by the Reverend Thomas Berington, brother of the late Bishop, who claimed that the "extraordinary faculties", now in Douglass' possession, were his property as Berington's executor and heir. Douglass, while recognizing the justice of this claim, was aware that it arose from more than mere family sentiment. The late Bishop's brother was being pressurised by Kirk, Berington, Wilkes, and Carter to demand the faculties which they considered "of the highest importance to the common cause". [2.] The orthodox fully realized that the possession of the faculties would strengthen the position of the Staffordians; produced publicly, they would vindicate the 'fame' and character of Bishop Berington, and, therefore, those of the clergy he had countenanced and encouraged. [3.] The issue, however, was not allowed to depend on the possession of faculties. The Staffordshire clergy determined on one more publication, giving a brief account of the origin of the dispute, with extracts from their correspondence with Walmesley, an account of their Exposition, and quotations from his letters to Gibson and Sharrock deploring their persecution of his clergy. This Short and Plain Statement of Facts duly

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1. A.A.W., J. Greenway to Douglass, Dec.22nd, 1798
   Milner to Dpuglass, Jan23rd, 1799
   Dawn II, pp.155, 228

2. A.A.W,, Thomas Berington to Douglass, Oct.4th, 1798
   B.A.A., c.1498, J. Berington to Kir, August 14th, 1798
   c.1499, Thomas Berington to Kirk, August 20th, 1798

3. A.A.W., Gibson to Douglass, Oct.6th, 1798

appeared on December 4th, 1798. It was signed by Carter, Southworth, Roe and Kirk, but not by Joseph Berington. Sharrock's attempts to re-open his case had hardened his determination that his agreement with Douglass was "complete and final"; although he had intended to join his colleagues in their appeal to Bishop Berington, he now declined any part in their Statement. [1] "If I, by joining my signature with yours", he told John Kirk, "acknowledge a right in any Bishop to resume the revision of a subject, which was canonically terminated, I lay myself open to endless attacks". [2] His motives were not without a mixture of malice; "... it would give me peculiar pleasure (should an occasion .. be taken to censure me) to see the AAVV labouring to overthrow their own jurisdiction, for .. to justify any new attack on me, it will be necessary to show, either that Mr. Douglass was an incompetent judge, or that his decisions, however regular, are liable to revision, that is, that he & they are invested with no judicial power".

The Short and Plain Statement provided the Staffordians with a means of guaging support for their resistance. Copies were "sent far and wide" to many priests and laity, most of them, though by no means all, Cisalpine sympathisers. [3] "About 20 or 30" replies were received, many of which have survived, and they reveal a surprisingly large body of support for the 'junto'. A few, like

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1. A.A.W., J. Berington to Douglass, June 7th, 1798
2. B.A.A., c.1502, J. Berington to Kirk, Sept. 4th, 1798
3. List in B.A.A., c.1535. The replies which have survived are to be found in B.A.A., c.1513-1532.

that of the formidable Irishman Archibald McDonald, working in Birmingham, declined "entering into the merits of the case", and considered that "Submission to superiors" was "the shortest and most becoming way of ending the controversy".[1] For the most part, however, the replies strike a different note. Richard Prendergast at Cobridge considered that the Statement must convince any unprejudiced reader that the Staffordians "if not Judges of the Faith, are Pract(ic)ioners in the Language of moderation, & the sentiments of Peace and Forebearance".[2] Charles Bellasyse, missioner at Euston near Northampton thought the Statement "Perfectly satisfactory" to "any person who is activated .. by zeal for truth, and is endowed with a small portion of Christian Charity".[3] Even those who thought the first proposition in the 'Creed' erronious felt that the Vicars should have stretched a point for the same of charity, since the Statement made the orthodoxy and good intentions of the Staffordians abundantly clear, and with this "every Catholic ought to be satisfied".[4] This consistent stress on peace and charity, on the over-zealousness of the Vicars, and on the "respectability" of the Staffordians received perfect expression in the reply of Christopher Taylor, Missioner at Shefford. Complaining of the Vicars' revival of

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1. B.A.A, c.1593, A. McDonald to Kir, Dec.9th, 1798
2. B.A.A., c.1513, R. Prendergast to Kir, Dec.6th, 1798
3. B.A.A., C.1516, C. Bellasyse to Kirk, Dec.10th, 1798
4. B.A.A., c.1527, J. Archer to Kirk, Dec.26th, 1798
   c.1528, James Wheeler to Kirk, Dec.26th, 1798

"these silly disputes" Taylor deplored the plight of the Church "when its rulers are the forwardest in promoting animosities among its well meaning members". Theirs it was indeed "to guard the scred depositum of faith; but they exceed their cpmmission, & act judiciously, when they search for heresy, as some men bore for coals, in a soil, that affords not the least indication of such a mineral". Charity was " a precious virtue covering a multitude of mistakes" and therefore any "innacuracy of expression dropping from Gentlemen.." should have been either "trod over unobserved, or pointed out, & adjusted in a friendly manner". Taylor, like so many English Catholics, considered himself a true moderate, steering a course between Bellarmine's "High-flying doctrine of Papal uncontrollability" on the one hand, and "what the Gallican Church has so strenuously asserted" on the other. For him the church was governed by "rational subordination & reciprocal control", according to the "ideas of our nation". The prospect of heresy-hunting or even of counter-Reformation notions of Episcopal command and clerical obedience, therefore, seemed to men of his stamp an unpredecented restriction of free thought - "If men are permitted to exercise the severities that we have lately witnessed, & upon such frivolous pretences, no man can draw his pen, or open his mouth with safety".[1]

Taylor's letter undoubtedly expressed the attitude of a great many English clergy and laity towards the disputes. Certainly many

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1. B.A.A., c.1529, Christopher Taylor to Kirk, Dec.27th, 1798.

of the orthodox to whom the Statement was sent returned no answer, [1] and they may be presumed to have disapproved. Nevertheless, the moderation and desire for peace-with-honour shared alike by Cisalpine sympathisers like Taylor and orthodox "non-combatants" like Thomas Gabb [2] was a source of strength to the Staffordians. Their Plain Statement presented them in the role of reasonable and orthodox priests, approved by their bishop, ready to acknowledge 'inaccuracy' of wording in their writings, but zealous for their honour and the Catholic Faith. The Vicars by contrast inevitably appeared in a less amiable light. James Corne, one of Douglass' correspondents and a non-participant in the feuds, summed the matter up. The bishops, he thought, "might have been satisfied with the explanation given". [3]

In the security of this conviction then, the men of Staffordshire refused further compromise, and the impasse continued through 1799. Then in August of that year a false move by Berington brought down the whole house of cards that was the 'reconciliation' with Douglass. Milner had published in 1798 a History of Winchester. The title was a deceptive one, for the work was intended to "pave the way for a genuine Catholic History of England". [4] The polemical tone of the book ruffled a good many feathers among churchmen and reviewers, for it presented an unpalatable mixture of deep learning and the roughest of polemic - 'coalescing' in

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1. A.A.W., James Sharrock to Douglass, Feb.27th, 1802.
2. B.A.A., c.1514, Thomas Gabb to John Kirk, Dec.9th, 1798
3. B.A.A., c.1520, J. Carne to Kirk, Dec.14th, 1798
4. The History and Survey of the Antiquities of Winchester (Winchester 1798)
   Farm Street, Milner to Plowden, May 14th, 1798

a "heterogeneous union the circumscribed intellect of a mendicant friar with the uncaptivated universality of a scholar". [1.] A prebendary of Winchester, Dr. John Sturges, attacked the History in Reflections on the Principles and Institution of Popery. Sturges was no bigot. In 1796 he had publicly defended the French clergy quartered at Winchester from accusations of immorality and proselytising, and he was on friendly terms with Milner himself. [2.] Nevertheless, stung by Milner's illiberality, his attack on Catholicism was comprehensive, and although recognising the existence of the Cisalpines and the fact that Milner must be accounted "a High-Church Catholic", he presumed that "most of (Milner's) own communion" would read the History "with approbation". [3.] This was more than flesh and blood, or at least Berington's flesh and blood, could be expected to bear, and in the August number of the Gentleman's Magazine he published a letter disowning Milner and all his works in the name of those Catholics whose minds were "truly English". [4.] Berington's purpose in the letter was, once more, to demonstrate the true 'liberality' of English Catholics, and in the true Cisalpine manner to repudiate all beliefs and practices not 'essential'

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1. E. Jerningham, Select Sermons and Funeral Orations ... from the French of Bossuet .. to which is prefixed an Essay .. on the Eloquence of the Pulpit in England. (3rd Edition, London 1801). p.149.

2. Gentleman's Magazine, 66, pp.373-375

3. J. Sturges Reflections on the Principles and Institutions of Popery. (Winchester 1799), pp.103, 107

4. Gentlemen's Magazine, 69, (ii), pp.653-4.

to the core of Catholicity. Praising "the spirit that dictated (Dr. Sturges') reflections" Berington took up point by point the Prebendory's criticisms of popery, and, point by point, endorsed them! He denounced the usurped powers, spiritual and temporal, of the Popes, "who have sometimes erred, and sometimes been extremely vicious...". He declared the Church to possess only so much infallibility as "may save her from grievous error, and perpetuate, by witnessing, the chain of primitive truths". He declared also that the law of celibacy was "to many extremely burdensome", and expressed a desire to see it abolished. And with perhaps his own enforced assent to the damning clause in the Creed of Pius IV in mind, he pronounced "intolerance" to be the "professed doctrine" of the Roman Church. The refugee communities in England had become the object of Protestant alarm and dislike, a tendency exacerbated by the publication of the fact that novices had been professed in England. A correspondent to the Gentleman's Magazine only a month before had bewailed the "convents for persons of both sexes, which arise almost every day in almost every county of England". [1] The Cisalpine resentment of these 'fanatics' whose growing unpopularity seemed the threaten the English Catholic claim to liberality, and therefore to toleration, has already been noticed; Berington reiterated it now in "severe animadversion" on the fact that "some religious societies, benevolently fostered in the country and protected by its laws, in direct opposition to the opinion and policy

1. Gentleman's Magazine, 69(ii), pp.450, 572-3, Vol70, p.329.

of that country, should dare to perpetuate themselves by admitting new members ..". But even Berington seems to have realized that he would not carry all his readers with him, and with a truly prodigal display of understatement admitted that "All Catholics, it is true, do not exactly speak thus ..".

The letter, not unnaturally, caused something of a sensation. Edward Jerningham wrote to congratulate Berington on checking "the leprous distillations of the Bigot". (Milner). Jerningham considered that the letter had "been of more service .. to the Catholic cause than anything that has occured for several years past: (it) has been the subject of every company I have frequented". [1.] The reaction of most Catholics, however, was very different. His scathing references to convents and celibacy especially affronted Catholic ladies, and the offending epistle became "the subject of complaint in every quarter of the kingdom". Even Cisalpines like Charles Butler condemned it. [2.]

Milner was inclined to welcome the letter. He was always anxious to make such "slippery gentry" as Berington show their "true colours", and the letter had, he thought, done just that. "I hope in God", he told Plowden, "it may have the effect of quickening the zeal of one of my friends in London. Certainly this affords him a fair opportunity of explaining those fatally ambiguous lines annexed to Berington's Vindication ..." [3.] He left

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1. Throck.Mss., Tribune folder 54, Edward Jerningham to Joseph Berington, n.d.
2. A.A.W., Milner to Douglass, Oct. 1799 (n.d.)
3. Farm Street, Milner to Plowden, Sept.26th, 1798

nothing to chance, though, and wrote to Douglass pointing out the choicest errors in the letter, suggesting that Berington's action had released Douglass from any pact with him, and that he was therefore free to condemn him. Milner hastened to assure Douglass of the purity of his motives. "It wounds my heart to hear the severe reflections which are thrown upon my superior and my friend, particularly on the present occasion, as the supposed protector of Mr. Berington in all his erronious principles."[1.] It was indeed an opportunity for Douglass to repair breaches between himself and the other Vicars, and between himself and Milner. Despite Milner's friendly letter the original 'reconciliation' between Berington and Douglass had angered him, and the Bishop and he were never 'easy' again in each others company. The seeds of the later divisions between Milner and his episcopal brethren were in fact sown in the disastrous negotiations of 1797, for his own rigid attitude to 'rebel' priests and religious disagreements during his episcopate were, as he himself admitted, even further hardened in reaction to that "shabby business".[2.] The letter provided an opportunity, too, of a final and victorious resolution of the Vicars' dispute with the recalcitrant Staffordians. In September George Bruning had lamented the lack of "Firmness & Unanimity" among the Vicars and complained that "they make not one common cause against the bolder or more artful ringleader, & come with more energy & decision ... against his disciples..".[3.] Berington's cautious reliance on Douglass' 'testimonial' had been flung to the winds, and the rebels' 'grey

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1. A.A.W., Milner to Douglass, Sept.25th, 1799

2. Farm Street, Milner to Plowden, May 8th, 1797
   A.A.W., Gibson to Douglass, May 8th, 1797
   Milner to Douglass, Nov.28th, 1799
   Ward, Eve of Catholic Emancipation 1803-29 (London, 1912-13),I,p.27

3. Ush.Mss., 313, c. George Bruning to (?), Sept.1st, 1799

eminence' was once more open to attack.

In November then, Douglass wrote to Berington. The tone and brevity of his letter were ominous. Having quoted Matthew xviii, 7, he wrote "... You know whose words these are. This scandal must therefore, be obviated ... I recommend to you to come forward immediately with some apology, or some explanation that may do it away and clear you before the Public". Berington agreed, and in December the retraction appeared. It was not calculated to improve matters. Berington had composed it by affixing such phrases as "I should not have said" to the statements in his previous letter, and the total effect was one of sarcastic reiteration. The dog, wrote William Fryer from Lisbon, had returned to his vomit.[1.] A few examples will illustrate the tone of the 'retraction'. "Viewing in the Roman Bishop the first Pastor of my Church, I should not have acknowledged that any part of the pwer at any time claimed by him was acquired by human means, and was lawfully resisted, and though I might perhaps be permitted not to believe in papal Infallibility, I should have maintained a portion of inerrancy to reside in the ministers of her Church more than might save her from grievous errors, that is, more than is necessary to preserve the sacred deposit of Faith. Of Monastic institutions I should not have said that to many they were the source of misery, to some the source of happiness; and in their foundation and continuance I should have expressed much interest; and not have wished that the law of celibacy, which I falsely termed burdensome to many, were repented ... I should have

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1. A.A.W., Douglass to Berington, Nov.22nd, 1799
Gentleman's Magazine, 69 (ii), p.1023.
A.A.W., Fryer to Douglass, July 2nd, 1800

represented every part of the Protestant Reformation as schismatical, and to all its authors indiscriminately have ascribed unworthy motives". ..."That my church ever persecuted I should not have conceded; and should have gloried in the intolerance of her professions". "Such", he ended, "I am warranted to believe, are the sentiments of an orthodox, an enlightened and a liberal English Catholic; and, as they sufficiently indicate what my principal errors were, I shall, at this time, proceed no further..".

Berington was a man of strong principles, anxious above all to demonstrate the reasonableness of his faith. It is not hard to see that the injunction to retract statements framed to offset the 'damage' done by Milner's Winchester would be especially galling to him. That he should have chosen to reply in a way so certain to provoke censure and alienate even further those who disapproved of his views in any case, is less easy to explain. In telling Douglass of the forthcoming retraction he betrayed no awareness that it would be unacceptable to the Bishop. [1] One can only attribute the tone of the 'Retraction' to a blind spot, some not quite rational quirk of his studiedly 'rational' mind. Always an extremist, who made great show of disregarding all other considerations than the 'reasonableness' of any particular position, this was the zenith of his recklessness.

The reaction of his opponents was predictable. Milner,

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1. A.A.W., Berington to Douglass, Dec.24th, 1799

Sharrock, and Gibson wrote to Douglass, assuring him that the "mock or burlesque" retraction was an insult aimed at him. Gibson was for 'discarding' Berington; "... he could not then be looked upon as belonging to us...". As an immediate measure he recommended that Douglass should "place him in the situation he was (in) before he sent his first Apology". Douglass could, he went on, send Berington a retraction to sign "but I would be short, particularly as he disputes every syllable". [1] Accordingly, on 11th February, Douglass wrote to Berington, withdrawing his faculties; on the 13th his Lenten Pastoral appeared. It contained a condemnation of Berington's books, with a declaration that they "maintained or insinuated many erroneous opinions". [2] These were hard measures for the mild Douglass, who saw in the parable of the tares encouragement to leave doubtful doctrine uncondemned till the Last Day. [3] In the present case though, he could hardly have acted differently. The 'accommodation' of 1797 had shown itself to be more of a bane than a blessing, and had not united the dissident elements of the Catholic community. In any case the squabbles of the Vicars and the Staffordshire clergy still dragged on, and Joseph Wilkes, supported by the President general of his order and entrenched in the Midland district, increased orthodox anger by his steady refusal to sign a formula retracing the Blue books. [4] Episcopal censure,

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1. A.A.W., Gibson to Douglass, Jan.13th, 1800
2. A.A.W., D.D., Feb.11th, (1800. Lenten Pastoral, printed Feb.13th,1800).
3. A.A.W., Milner to Douglass, Nov.28th, 1799
4. Dawn, II, p.157ff.

therefore, was in the air. Both sides recognised that the disputes which had been the chief feature of English Catholicism for twenty years had had their effect in increasing the vigilance of the Bishops, or rather in creating in them a vigilance which had never before been called for. The old comfortable anarchy of the Church before the Relief Act was a thing of the past. John Rigby, in 1798, complained that "these R(ight) R(everen)ds would make it impossible for any man to talk at all, if it was their pleasure to find him guilty of heresy". [1] True or not, Rigby's cri de coeur reflects a growing awareness of the changed atmosphere in English Church affairs. A striking example of that changed ethos is provided, in connection with Rigby himself, by Bishop Gibson. Rigby published, in 1799, an edition of Bossuet's Exposition, with an introduction by himself. In March 1800 Gibson mentioned it to Douglass. "Have you seen Dr. Rigby of Lancaster's Preface ...? It does not please. I wish books had approbations". Behind that wish lay a revolution in attitudes. [2]

In March Berington appealed to Rome. He declared his amazement that his original letter should have given offence at all, claimed that his 'retraction', given for the sake of peace was sincere, and complained of the unsatisfactory nature of Vicarial government. [3] Sir John backed up the appeal with a letter to the Prefect of Propaganda, whom he knew slightly, stressing Douglass' 1797 declaration

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1. B.A.A., c.1525, Rigby to Kirk, Dec. 21st, 1798
2. A.A.W., Gibson to Douglass, March 29th 1800
3. Prop. Scrit. Anglia 5, ff 735-7. Berington to Cardinal Borgia, March 2nd, 1800.

of Berington's orthodoxy, and complaining that Apostolic Vicars in times past had not behaved thus towards the gentry - "if they had done so .. maintenance would have been withdrawn, because it cannot be expected of us to maintain priests at our expense if they are liable to be suspended .. and are subject to the will and pleasure of an Apostolic Vicar".

He was as good as his word, and refused to employ or lend his chapel to another missioner for the Buckland congregation. "Thus", wrote Douglass in his diary, "does Sir John Throckmorton execute the menace of not keeping chaplains for the service of the public ... and is the first who takes that revenge of us Vicars Apostolic". [1] This appeal was made for the sake of the 'rights' of the clergy, but Berington expected nothing from it. Wearily he advised the Staffordshire clergy to retract - "get out of it, and let there be an end". [2] An attempt was made to have his faculties restored, pending Rome's verdict, on the unlikely grounds that he had meant the 'retraction'. "Who can believe it?" asked Douglass, and nobody did. [3] Milner, on learning of the appeal, persuaded Plowden to write to friends in Rome, to ensure that Berington's past record should be fully known, and the appeal was ignored. [4]

Berington's sense of defeat grew. "It sometimes passes through my head", he told Kirk, "If you could procure a proper establishment

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1. Prop. Scrit. Anglia, 5. ff. 735-7. Throckmorton to Borgia, March 1st 1800. D.D., March 1st, 1800. The action had been threatened by a number of the gentry who supported Wilkes (D.D.Jan.27th)

2. B.A.A., c.1589, Berington to Kirk, Feb.18th, 1800

3. D.D., March 30th, 1800

4. D.D., Feb.18th, 1801. A.A.W., Milner to Douglass (?) March, 1800
Sharrock to Douglass, May 13th, 1800
Prop. Scrit. Anglia, 5. ff.754. Throckmorton to Borgia, May 17th,1800

for yourself .. and I could procure Sir John's consent to quit Buckland, that I should like to spend the remainder of my life with you, doing nothing, but not hindering you from doing much". [1.] The sources of his discouragement are not hard to discover. The determination of the Vicars to set their house in order was abundantly clear, and the gentry would not concern themselves unduly over doctrinal matters where no political issue was at stake - "When we have to do with men, who are guided solely by the lust of power, who neither reason themselves, nor can weigh the arguments of reason, what can be done? The public, besides, even the small circle in which we live, are so little interested in these personal questions, & care so little about the results ...". [2.]

The issue, however, was complicated by the intervention of Monsignor Erskine. The Papal Envoy had a high conception of his own office, and had succeeded in antagonizing the Vicars Apostolic by treating them as mere instruments of Propaganda, whose authority was less than his own. In 1798 he offended Douglass by supporting Thomas Hussey, the Bishop of Waterford, in a jurisdictional dispute. Douglass, because of Erskine's interference, suffered a humiliating defeat at Hussey's hands, and he never quite forgave Erskine. [3.] On the death of Bishop Berington, Erskine insisted that all recommendations for a successor should proceed from himself, not the Vicars, and made no secret of his conviction that they were inept and lacking

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1. B.A.A., Berington to Kirk, August 28th, 1800

2. B.A.A., c.1597, Berington to Kirk, March 7th, 1800

3. Dawn, II. p.198 ff. W. Maziere Brady, Anglo Roman Papers, (Paisley, 1890), p.143.

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in zeal.[1] They began to fear that his disregard of their Episcopal dignity might result in the appointment of a Vicar to the Midland district who would not be a Bishop, in order to drive home their position as mere Roman delegates.[2] 1799, therefore, saw the Bishops thoroughly on the boil. Erskine had "all along acted hostile to us", Douglass told Gibson, "I hope we all shall unite in a remonstrance against his conduct".[3] The Cisalpines saw here an opportunity to further their own cause. In March 1800 Berington told Kirk that Douglass "feels the rod of Erskine, & wishes to find relief in the establishment of a regular Church government. A few days ago, he expressed himself much stronger against the abusive form of our government by VVAA, & the interference of the court of Rome, than I have ever done".[4] The Staffordians were at that moment negotiating with the Vicars through Dr. Bew, and were willing to sign a declaration owning the proposition "Supreme in discipline" to be inaccurate, and to "condemn" and withdraw their names from the whole Staffordshire Creed. The exception was John Carter, missioner at Wolverhampton, and one of the students who had publicly defended Berington's Douay Theses in 1771.[5] Carter was an apt disciple, and refused to retract anything whatsoever. Encouraged

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1. Leeds, Douglass to Gibson, March 30th 1799
   Milner to Gibson, April 25th, 1799
   Sharrock to Gibson, May 7th 1799

2. Leeds, Sharrock to Gibson, op.cit.

3. Leeds, Douglass to Gibson, Oct.30th, 1799

4. B.A.A., c.1600 Berington to Kirk, March 21st, 1800.
   The Vicars were in fact considering the possibility of Bishops in ordinary, but feared the independence as 'parochi' the change would give the clergy - A.A.W., Sharrock to Douglass, May 13th,1800

5. A.A.W., Douglass to Bew, Spril 10th, 1800
   Bew to Douglass, April 3rd, 1800.

by the Vicars' antagonism to Erskine, Berington now urged the Staffordians to put off their retraction, and declared his support for Carter. "He shall not be deserted. From the clergy here nothing is to be expected; but the principal gentry, I think, may be induced to take up the matter, I mean the general matter, & endeavour to screen the clergy from further oppression". [1.]

In December, Sir John Throckmorton approached Erskine on Berington's behalf, and Erskine summoned Douglass to see him. He told Douglass that "he had received a letter from Mr. Joseph Berington expressing sorrow for what had passed, & praying for a reconciliation". Douglass "made some observations on Mr. B's writings, when he interupted me with He is penitent, and God! there must be pardon for penitents. The Hussey affair struck into my mind, & his heat and violence .. in .. procuring .. a sanction for usurpation & injustice". [2.]

Despite his misgivings and encouragement from the other Vicars to resist Erskine's bullying, Douglass did draw up a formula, on lines suggester by Milner. Berington objected to certain minor points, mostly of phraseology, but Douglass refused to make any alterations. Erskine again intervened; he warned Douglass that Sir John was thinking of making public the correspondence relating to the retraction, and that Berington might publish his long threatened book on the Papacy. This threat evidently carried some weight,

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1. B.A.A., c.1633, Berington to Kirk (n.d.)

2. Leeds, Douglass to Gibson, Dec.17th, 1800

for Douglass softened, and made some minor changes. On 13th February Berington signed the formula, and the restoration of his faculties (and his character) was made public on the 20th.[1.]

Milner was disgusted. "I know what was retrenched from it, out of compliment to his pride, or his particular opinions". The "half measures that are now in fashion" had made his plans, he declared, "serve to augment the triumphs of the heterodox or ill-intentioned".[2.] Milner's dissatisfaction is hard to understand, and boded ill for the future, for there was little 'triumph' for Berington. The changes he had secured were small, and the retraction very full. In it he submitted his works to the Holy See, recognising the Pope's universal spiritual and ecclesiastical jurisdiction; he acknowledged his adherence to all the doctrines "defined or taught" by the Church. He accepted the canons on celibacy and the monastic life; and he revoked and condemned without specification, all the passages in his writings which said anything contrary to those doctrines or canons. He undertook to prevent the further circulation of such works, and consented to the publication of the formula of retraction.[3.] Berington indeed, smarted a little under the lash. He had entertained great expectations from Erskine's intervention, but although Douglass had made it known that he had never intended any reflection on Berington's moral probity, the retraction was sufficiently humiliating. Berington declined to discuss the matter with Kirk,

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1. D.D., Feb.18th, 1801, printed circular, Douglass to Clergy of London district, Feb.20th, 1801

2. Farm Street, Milner to Douglass, June 30th, 1801

3. Full text, Dawn II, p.214 (note.)
A.A.W., Berington to Erskine, Jan 4th, 1801.

and urged him not to retract the Staffordshire publications 'in globo'. The Vicars might "pretend" that these had caused "offence & scandal" yet Douglass had never mentioned them in any of his negotiations with Berington. "So absurd are men!". [1.]

For all that, tensions were slowly being eased. In March 1801 Gregory Stapleton, President of Old Hall College was consecrated Vicar Apostolic of the Middle district. The appointment of this "good natured man" instead of the dreaded Milner was a great relief to the Cisalpines, and made conciliation possible. [2.] In April Berington travelled to Bath to take the waters. He also took counsel with Bishop Sharrock over the remaining disputes. Berington found himself agreeably surprised by Sharrock's "candour and good sense", and Sharrock was equally "pleased with Mr. Berington's frankness, he having made several concessions which I scarcely expected". [3.] They agreed that the chief Staffordshire offence was disrespect to Walmesley, and Berington drew up a formula expressing submission to and respect for episcopal authority. They agreed also that the recalcitrant Carter should not be hounded, and on Sharrock's raising the possibility of exacting retractions of the Blue Books from the Committee, Berington suggested that if Wilkes would agree to sign the same formula as Bishop Berington, with the same explanatory preamble, the lay members of the Committee "might be admitted to reconciliation upon easier terms ...". A formula

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1. B.A.A. c.1644, Berington to Kirk March 31st 1801

2. B.A.A. c.1635, Berington to Kirk, Jan.4th 1801

3. B.A.A. c.1647 Berington to Kirk May 12th 1801
   Leeds, Sharrock to Gibson, May 7th 1801

on the lines suggested by Berington was submitted to the Staffordians by Stapleton, as their Bishop, and despite last ditch attempts by Gibson for sterner measures, the Staffordians signed on August 20th, 1801. They renounced "every expression which conveys .. disrespect, or derogates from the superior rights of the Episcopal order'... "and condemned and retracted the "bad, noxious or dangerous doctrine" contained in the writings they had signed or approved. At last,it seemed,"peace & union (were) completely restored". [1.]

It was not quite so. Carter steadily refused to retract anything, and was supported in his obduracy by Dr. Bew. A conference was held at Longbirch on February 27th, with Bew representing Carter, and Bishop Stapleton supported by William Poynter, the new President of Old Hall, and Prior Jerome Sharrock. Bew considered that Carter would not sign any retraction or explanation which conceded more than the Exposition of our Principles, and hinted that "if Mr. Carter were pressed too strongly .. it might occasion a flame - not easily to be extinguished". On Bew's retiring, Stapleton informed the others that "this combustible matter for a future flame" was the group of letters received by the Staffordians in support of their Plain Statement, which bespoke a substantial body of moderate feeling in favour of Carter. [2.] This 'Bully' had no effect, however, and Stapleton informed Carter that he might be reluctantly obliged to suspend him. Carter remained adamant,

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1. A.A.W., Copy of the 'Retraction' dated August 20th,1801. The Wilkes case petred out into a jurisdictional squabble, and had no further effect on the body at large - Dawn II, pp.

2. A.A.W., Jerome Sharrock to Bishop Sharrock, Feb.27th, 1702

and in a will composed in July, explained his motives. "I conscientiously - Domine tu scisti - refused to sign away the canonical liberties of the Christian Clergy, and obliquely to wound the reputation of two beloved Superiors .. Peace was my dear delight: but no frowns, no terrors, neither poverty nor fear of temporary disgrace could ever shake my attachment to truth". [1.]

Carter, like so many of the Cisalpines, was a popular preacher, whose sermons drew many Protestant listeners, and he made a number of converts among them. Bishop Stapleton was unwilling to jeapordize this apostolate by harsh action. [2.] Feeling among the Wolverhampton congregation ran high, and many declared that they would receive no other priest. Berington, however, was well aware of the realities of the case, and the same conviction of a lost cause which underlay his own retraction left him little expectation of a victory for Carter. "These threats mean little, & soon subside. By what means is he to be supported? Dr. Bew some time ago, assured me that many persons were willing to subscribe. This we shall see". [3.] The matter was never put to the test. Stapleton died suddenly in May 1802, and Carter did not long survive him. With them died the Staffordshire disputes. In 1803 John Milner was consecrated Bishop of Castabala and Vicar Apostolic of the Middle district. Five years before, his appointment would have produced an uproar, and perhaps even organised resistance by the Midland clergy. He was accepted now without demur; nothing could more eloquently demonstrate the demise of the Cisalpine movement. [4.]

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1. Dawn, II. p.245
2. A.A.W., Stapleton to Douglass, Jan.2nd 1802
3. B.A.A., c.1660, Berington to Kirk, May 21st, 1802
4. W. Maziere, Brady, Annals of the Catholic Hierarchy (Rome 1877) p.221, Dawn II, p.244.

The reasons for the collapse are not mysterious. Cisalpinism belonged to the eighteenth century, and the eighteenth century was dead. That herald of nineteenth century Catholic Romanticism, Chateaubriand's Genie de Christianisme was begun in London in 1799: the same year saw the publication of Berington's ill-fated letters to the Gentleman's Magazine, and the conjunction has a certain symbolic value.[1] The matter may be expressed in terms of a misplaced bet. Berington and his colleagues had cast their lot with the forces of 'enlightenment' - with Priestley and Rational Dissent, with hostility to the Establishment, with Foxite Whiggery, with the French Revolution. These, they considered, were the channels through which the benefits of the British Constitution might be extended to Catholics. The Revolution they had welcomed so enthusiastically destroyed their causes, for in the Conservative reaction which swept England in the years after 1789 Cisalpinism shared the fate of the 'liberal' forces with which it was identified. As early as 1793 Sir John had complained that "If you do not approve of despotic power you are branded as an enemy of your country", and feared that the execution of Louis had "ruined" the cause of liberty, and driven "all mankind to despotism".[2] By the end of the century, Revolutionary opinions were discredited in England, and the stigma attached itself to every cause with which supporters of the Revolution were associated. Even the Sunday Schools movement, with its non-denominational

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1. Frederick Heyer, The Catholic Church from 1684 to 1870 (London 1969), p.119

2. Throck.Mss., J. Throckmorton to W. Throckmorton, Feb.8th, 1793

co-operation, which Berington had supported in 1789, was denounced by the Bishop of Rochester in 1800 as inculcating "Jacobinical religion and Jacobinical politics". [1] The British Critic in 1800 congratulated Milner on writing "like a friend to the British constitution and ... with a zeal for Christianity", contrasting him with Berington -"a partisan of democracy, a flatterer of opposition .. and applauder of the horrible defection in France ..". A Protestant correspondent to the Gentleman's Magazine in 1799 condemned Berington for sounding "the tocsin of revolution in his own doctrine," praising the 'blaze' of Milner's 'animated pen', which drove "into boding darkness the hood-minded phalanxes of innovation and democratic principles". [2]. The Cisalpine strategy of denouncing abuses in Catholicism in order to win Protestant approval, therefore, became suddenly fatal to their cause. Overnight, it seemed, it became the "Duty of every citizen ... to protect the venerable fabrick of civil and religious government as we received it from our forefathers". The flight of Priestley to the freer fields of the New World symbolized the fall of the Liberal ideal, and the dedication of his last published work jointly to Berington and a Bishop of the American Episcopal Church is fitting epitaph. [3] Not all the Cisalpines grasped the fact clearly - on the appearance of Geddes' Modest Apology in 1800 Lord Petre defended its "system of arbitrary Latitudinarianism", on the traditional Cisalpine grounds. "This excellent

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1. H. G. Jones, The Charity School Movement. (Cambridge 1938), pp.153-4

2. British Critic XV, p.157
   Gentleman's Magazine, 69, p.749

3. Priestley, Works, XVII, p.69

work for the purpose it was intended, has already ... reconciled some great and eminent characters to the safety of permitting the professors of the Roman Catholic religion to be placed on the same footing with Protestants. (Geddes') manner of writing may shock some Catholic ears; but the candidly acknowledging and not defending our ecclesiastical discipline on all occasions, are the only effectual method of reconciling protestants to our religion...". [1] But Lord Petre took no account of the temper of the times; none of the political concessions made to Catholics in the new century arose from Protestant acknoledgement of Catholic 'liberality'". [2]

The Church in England shared the general upheaval. Even dedicated liberals like Arthur O'Leary found themselves badly shaken by the revolutionary climacteric and totally alienated from the Cisalpines. In 1800 the former panegyrist of the age of reason and toleration, so often bracketed with Berington by protestant commentators, came forward to denounce the "disciples of the New Philosophy", to stress the anti-democratic and anti-rationalist tendency of Catholicism, and to condemn "publications which tend to expose the pastors to the derision and contempt of those who were accustomed, and whose duty it was, to respect them...

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1. England, op.cit., pp.261-3. For the Modest Apology, cf. Ch. III above, p.

2. G.I.T. Machin, The Catholic Question in English Politics (Oxford 1964). D. Gwynn The Struggle for Catholic Emancipation (London 1928) Prof. T. A. Birrell (inaugural lecture) Non-Catholic Writers and Catholic Emancipation. (Nijmegen, 1953).

Let the influence of their priests be destroyed, they will become infidels". He procured a complete set of Berington's writings with the intention of giving him "a good dressing", but died before he completed his work. He was not the only liberal to repudiate his earlier opinions, [1] and the orthodox were no more backward in joining in the general hue after innovation. The Cisalpine disputes had precipitated a general toughening of Vicarial attitudes. Among the resolutions passed at the Episcopal 'synod' of 1803 after Milner's consecration was one appointing a 'censor librorum'. The priest concerned seems never to have exercised his office, but the very existence of such a functionary would have been unthinkable at any time in the eighteenth century. In addition, the 'Observanda', or instructions to missioners, issued after the Synod tightened up clerical discipline and condemned all 'innovation'. [2] But by far the most significant portent of the changing temper of the English Church was the appointment of Milner to the Middle District. Milner's was the dominant influence in English Catholic affairs during the first quarter of the new century, and for all his Johnsonian mannerisms

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1. Arthur O'Leary, Address to the Lords Spiritual and Temporal (London 1800), pp.11, 14-15.
A.A.W., Milner to Douglass, Feb.23rd, 1800
Preston Record Office, Coghlan Papers, Milner to Coghlan, Feb.10th, 1800

2. A.A.W., Douglass Papers Minutes of Synonds, The Revd. J. Hodgson. The 'observanda' also clamped down on theatre attendance by priests - a notorious Cisalpine failing - James Archer frequented the theatres to improve his preaching style, and Berington himself had produced a translation of Lessing's Emilia Gallotti which ran for three nights at Drury Lane - Rice University Studies, 52, pp.7ff
Milner, Serious Expostulation, p.94.

and old-fashioned ways he was a man of the nineteenth century. Berington, despite his Medieaval studies, remained an Enlightenment figure, and, for example, found Gothic architecture "disgusting", "Capricious" "abhorrent from nature's simple forms..". Milner has a fair claim to be considered the greatest authority on Gothic architecture of his day, and he built the first church of the Gothic Revival in England.[1] Such differences penetrated to an explicitly religious level. The devotional temper of English Catholicism during the eighteenth century was cool, restrained, the tone set by Gother. In 1800 Berington published a selection of Gother's prayers for use in the Midlands, but in his first pastoral Milner complained that Gother's prayers were "too argumentative and dry", and within a few years produced a prayer-book for his district "full of unction and very devotional". His eventual introduction of indulgenced public devotion to the Sacred Heart into England, a devotion viewed with suspicion by many perfectly orthodox priests, was an even clearer manifestation of the new 'taste'.[2] Again, his immediate predecessors had been eighteenth century gentlemen, their career and appointments to the episcopacy remarkably similar in many ways to those of their Anglican brethren.[3] Milner, the son of a tailor who died in a

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1. H.C. Husenbeth, The Life of Bishop Milner (Dublin 1862), pp.530ff.
J. Berington A Literary History of the Middle Ages (London 1814) pp.326-7.
Kenneth Clarke The Gothic Revival (Penguin Books 1964) pp.60,87-89.

2. (J. Berington) Gother's Prayer for Sunday and Festivals (Wolverhampton, n.d.)
J. Milner Pastoral Letter to the Clergy .. of the Midland District Dec.27th, 1803 p.xxii.
An Exercise for Sanctifying Sundays and Holidays (3rd Edition, Wolverhampton, 1810).
Husenbeth, op.cit.,

3. P. Doyle unpublished M.A. Durham Thesis, The Giffords of Chillington, p.222 and the same writer's "Patrons and Protogees", Staffordshire Catholic Historical Journal, Winter 1966.

lunatic asylum, did not fit this pattern. Much of the mutual mistrust between himself and the Catholic gentry may have originated in a more than theological differences, as his removal of his episcopal residence from Long-Birch to Wolverhampton and his declatation that he was no "gentleman farmer" reveal. Milner was the bishop of a new people, a popularist Catholicism which the eighteenth century had not known; his self-identification with the Irish Catholics and with Catholic radicals like William Eusebius Andrews were the manifestation of a new atmosphere in which Cisalpinism could not, and did not, survive.[1.] The classic picture of the eighteenth century church, a handful of tennants meeting for 'prayers' in the squire's house, was already a thing of the past. The gentry were considered, and considered themselves, the saviours of the Faith in penal times, but by the end of the century the unsatisfactory nature of 'seigneurial' missions was becoming clear. Congregations economically dependent on a squire who might lose his chapel in a card-game and who, with his priest, was often absent for prolonged periods, had little chance of expansion, or even of maintaining numbers. Cisalpine 'disciplinary' stoppages of stipends and closing of chapels, like Sir John at Buckland in 1801, underlined the point. The way forward lay in replacing seigneurial chapels by independent missions under the control of the Vicars-Apostolic. The Catholic Relief Act of 1791 made such a change possible, the enormous increase in Catholic numbers at the end of the century, particularly in Urban areas, made it necessary. Between 1791 and 1814 almost nine

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1. Ward, Eve of Catholic Emancipation I, pp.28ff.
II, p 173ff.
Prof. Birrell, Non Catholic Writers, pp.15-16.

hundred Catholic chapels were opened in England, the overwhelming majority of them without seigneurial connections.[1.] Many of the new Catholics were Irish, and the Irish brought a new element into English Catholic life. The Cisalpines, indeed like so many English Catholics, despised and mistrusted their Hibernian brethren - "What have we to do with the Irish?" asked Lord Stourton in 1810, "We have nothing to do with them but to pray for them". The future of the Catholic cause, nevertheless, lay with them. The Act of Union ensured that realistic attempts to secure Relief at Westminster in future would not be deferentially negotiated by Catholic gentlemen willing to accept a Government dole on Government terms. Irish Popularist agitation was to secure the constitutional benefits which the Cisalpines had solicited at the cost of religious compromise.[2.] The matter cannot be overstressed. Cisalpinism was as much a question of tactics as of belief. While emancipation was a favour sought by a weak and unpopular minority, while conciliation and concession seemed the only avenue to the franchise, English Catholic squires could be relied upon to support the Cisalpine programme. If Parliament found it in its interests to encourage such compliance with the Protestant prejudices of the Nation, then Cisalpinism posed a formidable challenge to the Vicars. But in the new century the demand for Emancipation issued not from a nervous

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1. J. Bossy "Four Catholic Congregations" in Recusant History 9, pp.88ff. "More Northumbrian Congregations", Recusant History, 10 pp.11ff.
Ward, Eve I, p.186

2. ibid., p.120
Birrell, loc.cit.
R. W. Linker "English Catholics in the 18th C: an Interpretation" Church History, xxxv. pp.303 (n.72) pp.12-15.

minority, but from a volatile people goaded by a sense of injustice and oppression. Power passed from the hands of men like Lord Petre, and Cisalpinism lost its raison d'etre.

This is not to suggest that Cisalpinism disappeared without trace in 1803. George III's coronation oath scruples, the resignation of the 'Ministry of All the Talents' in 1807, and the tory ministries of Portland and Percival ensured Cisalpine inactivity during the first decade of the century, but Grattan's bill of 1813 seemed in many ways a re-enactment of the situation in the 1790's. The new bill contained a strongly 'Cisalpine' Oath, and embodied the suggestions originally broached by Lord Petre in 1794, that the correspondence between the Vicars and Rome should be subject to the inspection of a lay commission appointed by the government.[1] The Irish Bishops rejected the proposals as schismatical, but Bishop Poynter of London was prepared to accept them if necessary. The English Catholic Board indeed, had pledged themselves to "make any sacrifice that is not inconsistent with their religious principles", and Poynter, though more cautious, clearly shared their basic attitudes.[2] Milner did not, and in a confrontation between himself, his fellow Vicars, and the Catholic Board, the new alignments within the Catholic community revealed themselves. Milner attempted to force his fellow bishops into condemnation of the Bill, but they were unwilling to take any decisive step, and Milner found himself alone. The other Vicars, indeed, had profound misgivings

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1. Eve, II, pp.23-55. Machin op.cit., pp.12-15.

2. Eve II, p.29

about the restrictions in the Bill, but did not question the necessity of submitting to some restrictions. From this point onward the disputes over emancipation within the English Church became disputes, not between the laity and the Vicars, but between Milner and his Irish on the one hand, and the Vicars and the English gentry on the other. This new situation had the dual effect of dividing Milner irreperably from his fellow Bishops, and of closing the division between those Bishops and the Cisalpines, who found themselves at one in thinking Milner "the Calamity of the Catholics of our time". [1.]

The quarrel between Milner and the other Vicars over Plunkett's Relief Bill in 1821 epitomizes the complexities of the new situation. Plunkett's bill incorporated a version of the Oath of Supremacy, accompanied by an explanation which Bishop Poynter thought sufficient to render the Oath acceptable, as did all the English and Scottish Vicars, and most of the Irish Hierarchy. Milner alone dissented. Most English Catholics, accustomed to their minority status, took for granted that any government concessions would be accompanied by such uncomfortable 'securities'. In this the Vicars were at one with the laity, and though the Oath was distasteful to them, they accepted it as a painful necessity. The negotiation was in many

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1. Charles Butler's Letter-Books - BM Add.Mss.25125-9 Butler to Berington, Nov.13th 1817. For an excellent summary of the disputes, Dr. J. Connell's University of Chicago Ph.D. Thesis, "The Roman Catholic Church in England, 1553-1850; a study in internal politics". Ch.IV, "The Vicars and John Milner" (Copy in A.A.W.).

ways reminiscent of previous Cisalpine Bills - the Oath and its explanatory clause were drawn up by a Catholic layman, and then submitted to Poynter for his comments. It differed radically from the Cisalpine negotiations in the unanimity of Vicars and laity, in the absence of lay determination to push the Bill through at all costs, in defiance of the Vicars if necessary. The wholly new element was the insistence of Milner and the O'Connell party on 'unconditional Emancipation', Milner's certainty that "999 out of 1000 object to every compromise", summed up in O'Connell's scathing verdict on Poynter - "Poynter by name, but spaniel by nature". It was this rejection of the premise which underlay the attitudes of both the Cisalpines and the Vicars which made Milner so divisive a force within the Church of his day, and which dwarfed the remaining differences between the Cisalpine remnant and the Bishops they had once opposed. [1.]

As a theological 'ethos', Cisalpinism lingered long after 1803. Milner, though unopposed by the Staffordshire clergy, still found himself forced to "fight (his) way, step by step, to do away wrong notions & practices", and "new invented discipline". [2.] The stringencies of the new Observanda roused the Cisalpine clergy in London to murmur against this "system of innovation in our discipline". But the fighting spirit had gone, and Berington complained that instead of the uniting "in some measure of resistance", they "talk & talk incessantly". [3.] In private and

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1. Eve II, pp.57-93. Henriques "Religious Toleration", p.168
2. Ushaw PA, d.21, Milner to (?), n.d.
3. B.A.A., c.1691, Berington to Kirk, March 12th, 1804

in public the Cisalpines remained Cisalpine. The Veto dispute provoked a brace of pamphlets from men like Sir John Throckmorton and the priest James Wheeler, offering the crown the nomination of Catholic Bishops, involving the abolition of the Vicars, and setting those prelates talking once more of Auctorem Fidei and schism. [1] Cisalpines continued to express their horror at the past and present "conduct of the Popes, and their Ultramontane adherents", and to complain of those who "attempt to contract the pale of orthodoxy". [2] In 1814 Berington published his Literary History of the Middle Ages, which contained long citations from his manuscript History of the Papacy; in its various reprintings the work continued to affront the untramontane sensibilities of Victorian clergy. [3] J. C. Eustace's Classical Tour, published in 1812, with

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1. Sir John Throckmorton, Considerations arising from the Debates in Parliament on the Petition of the Irish Catholics (London 1806). J. Wheeler A Letter from the Revd. J. Wheeler to Sir John Lawson Bart. Containing a Proposed arrangement in which all due provision is made both for the inviolable maintenance of the civil and religious Establishments of the country and for the complete security of the vital interests of the CATHOLIC RELIGION with a view to the attainment of Catholic Emancipation. (London 1810)
Ushaw PA D.6. Bp. Poynter to Bp. Gibson, Feb.13th, 1806
A.A.W., Sharrock to Douglass, May 27th, 1806.
A.A.W., Milner to Collingridge, Nov.7th, 1810.

2. Butler's Letter Books, Butler to Lingard, 4-8 December 1809
Butler to Berington, Nov.13th 1817 - "I always thought the conduct of the Popes in regard to this country, had been very bad; but .. I never suspected that it had been as bad as I find it".

3. Berington Literary History of the Middle Ages (London 1814) pp.184 ff, 224 ff. The 19th century owner (a priest) of the copy of the History in my possession has scrawled against one of Berington's anti-papal sallies "Is the man a Catholic?".

its panegyrics on toleration and liturgical reform, its attacks on "insolent and domineering pontiffs", "nuns and nun-like friars", the Council of Trent, and "polemical contest", demonstrated that the Cisalpine spirit was far from dead. [1.] There was even an "apostolic succession" of younger clergy who associated themselves with the older Cisalpines, and men like John Lingard and Mark Tierney perpetuated into the age of the biretta and the Roman collar much of the Cisalpine ethos. [2.] Lingard was a friend and disciple of Berington's, and after the latter's death published a selection of his correspondence. He too should complain of "monopolizers of orthodoxy", of "these days of hyper-criticism and hyper-Catholicism", denounce in Catholic periodicals such devotions as the Litany of Loretto, and urge the restoration of an English hierarchy elected by the clergy and even, maybe, by the laity. [3.] Yet for all that the world had changed. Lingard's attacks on the Litany of Loretto could not be published in his own name, and he was obliged to conceal himself behind the elaborate framework of a recent convert's relation of his Protestant objections to the Litany. Moreover, Lingard, unlike Berington, was no Ishmael, his hand against all men. His attitudes were the attitudes of his generation, little more than the insular conservatism which had always

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1. J. C. Eustace, A Classical Tour Through Italy (London 1812)

2. W. O. Chadwick, The Victorian Church I (London 1966) pp.277-8
Haile and Bonney Life of John Lingard (London n.d.) passim.
Birrell Dublin Review 229, p.267

3. Catholic Miscellany, New Series July-December 1828. pp.85-99
Catholic Magazine III, pp.19-20, 205,303. Haile and Bonney, op.cit., p.263.
The Litany of Lorretto was one of Milner's favourite prayers.

been inherent in English Catholicism, and which, although a source of strength to the Cisalpines in their first battles with the vicars, were not properly Cisalpine at all. Lingard's view of papal prerogative and power were made abundantly clear in his Anglo-Saxon Church, and fell far short of Cisalpine requirements. Like Berington he rejected the title 'Roman Catholic', but he did so because it "implied what we cannot admit, that a man may be a Catholic without being in communion with the See of Rome". [1.]

Even Berington's attitudes were affected by the times. In his early dealings with Protestants he had aimed at conciliation. His urbane, liberal tone, his admission of the corruptions and absurdities of Catholicism, his insistence that at bottom little divided Christian believers of any Church or sect - these had dominated his controversies with Priestley, Wesley, Fordyce, Hawkins. The letters published by Lingard after Berington's death reveal quite another approach. Addressed to a variety of Protestant writers and controversialists, they are full of angry condemnations of Protestant misrepresentation, and of Protestantism itself. - "The minds of you all overflow with prejudices", "Had the scriptures never been written, our faith would have been equally secure. Where would yours have been?". The anarchical principle of private judgement, the key-stone of the Reformation, lets everyman loose from

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1. J. Lingard, The Antiquities of the Anglo Saxon Church, (London 1806). Lingard constantly refers to the Pope's "plenitude of authority" - not a Beringtonian phrase, except in irony! Catechetical Instructions (London 1840), p.38.

authority...", "you are .. conscious that your reformation cannot stand on its own merits, and that, if the charges, even the silliest charges, against us, be relinquished, the sandy ediface must fall". [1.]

So radical a change of heart and style must be given its full weight of the passing of the Cisalpine spirit is to be grasped. The English Church had flirted with heterodoxy for twenty years; the flirtation was at an end. Liberality as a religious attitude had been largely discredited, as a political device had outlived its usefullness. The image of Catholicism which Cisalpinism had presented to the English public bore little relation to the realities of the early nineteenth century. The British Review commenting on two 'non-popery' sermons of 1814 remarked that "a few years ago" such sermons would have had little interest, but "the times are greatly altered in this respect. The dormant claims of popery have risen with renewed vigour from the long slumber which some mistook for death". [2.] The non-popery agitation which was to erupt in the late 1820's had displayed itself already in the elections of 1806, and from then onwards anti-Catholic feeling grew. As a result of the political alliance of the Catholics with their Whig "Friends", Tory clergy no longer considered Catholicism a bulwark against Jacobinism; the Act of Union raised fears

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1. Catholic Miscellany, loc.cit.

2. The British Review and London Critical Journal, V. p.511

that Catholic attempts to "rationalize" the position of the Church of Ireland threatened the English Establishment, and rank and file churchmen saw even the English Catholics as a danger to the Church.[1] The Protestant Dissenters and the Tory hordes of Wesleyan Methodism shared the anti-Catholicism of their allies within the Church, and their oft-reiterated charges of idolatory, treason, mental slavery, and intollerance, formed an "excellent demonstration of the fact that prejudice cannot be dispelled by reason".[2] For this popular and unreasoning hostility Cisalpinism had no nostrums, and so it withered.

By the year of his death Berington's disreputable past had been largely forgotten, and to the readers of the Catholic Miscellany he was "one of the most learned scholars and elegant writers in our body", the first Catholic author to promote " the study of the beauties of his native language", and the compiler of an unanswerable polemic volume, the Faith of Catholics.[3] The Protestant public, too, had forgotten his earlier role as an enlightener of his brethren - to the biographer of Hannah More a few years after Berington's decease he was simply another Papist - "The Roman Catholic priest, the Pope's vicar-general".[4] The English Church, deeply conservative and insular as it was and would remain, could not resist

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1. Henriques, Religious Toleration, pp.136-174.

2. Henriques, op.cit. p.146. For the sense of frustration such prejudice caused among Berington's friends see Catholic Miscellany, J. H. Hexter, "The Protestant Revival and the Catholic Question in England 1778-1829" in Journal of Modern History VIII, pp.297-319

3. Catholic Miscellany VIII, pp.34ff.

4. William Roberts Memoirs of the life .. of Mrs. Hannah More (London 1834), III, p.273

for ever the encroaching tide of ultramontanism. The same issue of the Miscellany which carried Berington's obitury notice contained an approving mention of de Maistre's Du Pape. [1] A year after Berington was laid to rest in the Parish Church at Buckland a young Anglo-Spanish priest was appointed Rector of the English College at Rome. He was destined to fulfil the Cisalpine longing for an English Hierarchy, to restore England to the Ecclesiastical firmament, but in a spirit and for an end diametrically opposed to theirs. His name was Nicholas Wiseman.

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1. Catholic Miscellany, IX, p.43.

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APPENDIX (A).

The following is a photographic copy of the printed Theses which were the cause of Berington's dismissal from Douai. The Poster format was adopted in such sheets to enable them to be publicly displayed some days before the Disputation of which they formed the matter. The copy reproduced is that preserved at Ushaw College, Durham. The manuscript underlinings are contemporary with the dispute, and are identical with those on the copy of the Theses preserved in A.A.W. (48).



THESES
EX LOGICA ET PSYCHOL

LOGICA, cogitandi ars, *jure cæteris Philosophiæ partibus præmittitur, ipsa quippè varias humanæ mentis operationes scrutatur & dirigit: & mente r*
Lo mankind is man, *inquit Poëta noster. At hujus disciplinæ tanta licet excellentia, tanta pulchritudo, tanta sit amœnitas: mirum quanto à multis in contem*
bilem movet. Verùm, dicam enim, hanc infamiæ notam Logicæ infixit teterrima illa verborum farrago, litium fomes, ingeniorum lues, à Scholasticâ gregis
hujus scientiæ nomine falsò exornata. De rebus, non vocabulis agit sana ratio. Juvenilis animus gravi nugarum pressus pondere, onus fastidit, jugo se
tota scena est: nos Logicam tractamus, ut prosit, & ut placeat: dicatur humanæ mentis historia. Perspectis variis animæ evolutionibus, ipsam mox examini
imperfecta hæc Metaphysicæ pars! Quasdam substantiæ spiritualis proprietates tenemus; res in occulto manet. Procul este profani: non audeat ulteriùs progredi t
rerum dicat Materialista, animam inter & corpus æternum & ineluctabile discrimen, inquit de Buffon: *quod & demonstrat* Psychologus. *At si hæc quæstio rectè in*
ret Philosophus, hominem contemplaretur. Non est homo anima sola, non est corpus solum, sed ex unione cujusdam animæ cum quodam corpore ens mixtum resul
minat vir Metaphysicus, Genevensis Bonnet, *cui Dædaleos hos penetrare sinus, magis quàm sperare homini fas est, concessit Deus. Limites suos habet*
us suas uniant; id exoptat Religio, suadet ratio. Quæ corporis sunt, corpus habeat; quæ animæ sunt, anima habeat: justitiæ Lex est. Nec Deus interfit, nisi dig
se mavult ratio & humanitas: à Materialistarum telis semet tueatur, qui brutorum operationes mechanicè interpretatus, latus hosti patefecit.

I. EX PROLEGOMENIS.

DEfinetur Philosophia *perceptio rerum naturalium discursiva.* Procul eliminetur quæ à Malebranchio, quæ à Dagoumero traditur definitio. Placet Peripateticorum, quia cum nostra coincidit; displicet Platonicorum. Existere Philosophiam probat ipsius *objectum, subjectum, motivum.* Objectum res naturales; subjectum humana mens; motivum rerum evidentia & sensus intimus. Motivum aliud Metaphysicè, aliud moraliter dictum. Physicum, ab objecto nomen sumens, surreptitium. Sensibus errores suos nemo imputet.

II. EX IISDEM.

OMnis veritatis regula non est evidentia. Falsum ne dicas, quod *concipere* non vales; nec continuo *contra rationem* esse, quod *supra* eam effenditur, quicquid dicant Deistæ. Deo loquenti credendum: [illud] ratio, exigit *testimonii* evidentia. *Methodicè* dubitans tutò progreditur; [sed] sequendæ Philosophi via melior non est. Variæ existentiæ Philosophiæ [sunt]; quam vix homini *absolutè* necessariam dixerim. In varias dividitur [species]; naturalem tenet, qui ratione gaudet: Artificialis studio & me[ditatione] acquiritur: infusam habere Adamo licuit, inquiunt Scholastici.

EX LOGICA.

I. IDEÆ.

MEns humana, variarum affectionum capax, varias modificationes sub[it]. *Perceptio* est facultatis percipiendi seu *perceptibilitatis* modificatio; *sensatio* facultatis sentiendi seu *sensibilitatis* modificatio. Prior generalior. *Idea* latiore suo sensu est omnis essendi modus, cujus conscia est anima. Omni sui modificationi identificatur. Objecta externa, ope sensuum, [modificationes] sentit anima: ergo *extra se*

IV. MEMORIA.

ILla animæ facultas, quâ ideæ semel impressæ, denuo revocantur, *memoria* dicitur. Quæ ideæ primum excitandæ requiritur occasio, eadem eidem resuscitandæ necessaria est: ejusdem effectûs eadem causa. In ipsâ idearum revocatione anima passiva, an activa est? Dicam, passiva. In somniis mira idearum series: hujus ratio sufficiens in impressionibus variis fibris communicatis quærenda. Hic anima, contemplatrix otiosa, omnem modificationem lubens subit. Horrendum te invadit spectrum? Solam mentis tuæ affectionem noli timere.

V. JUDICIUM.

SEcunda mentis operatio judicium, in comparatione duarum vel plurium idearum consistens: ergo est actus mentis. Relatio & rerum oppositio ex ipsarum essentiâ dimanat; quas inter & mentis capacitatem proport[ionem] primitiva. Judicium aliud *affirmativum*, aliud *negativum* aliud; utrumque actus simplex; utrumque vel verum, vel falsum: nec una propositio alia verior. Propositio omnis, sensum habens, est semper determinatè vera vel falsa. Ubicumque inter duas ideas relationem vel oppositionem immediatè videt mens, habetur *evidentia*: in ipsâ fundatæ veritates *primariæ* sunt; aliæ *secundariæ*.

VI. DISCURSUS.

MEns inter ideas convenientiam vel disconvenientiam immediatè non percipiens, ad tertiam sui operationem progreditur, ideas alias advocando. Hæ *intermediæ* sunt; quarum collectio *discursus*, actus intellectûs à judicio distinctus. Variæ discursûs species ad veritatis inquisitionem excogitatæ. Opinio alia *latè*, alia *strictè* sumpta: illa, non hæc, simul cum scientiâ in eodem intellectu de eodem objecto sociabilis. Cautè argumentationis suæ partes disponens, quartam exercet mentis operationem, *methodum*. Hæc multiplex: usitatior *Analytica* & *Synthetica*: illa inquirendæ veri[tati] jam detectæ explicandæ inservit.

III. ANI

SUbstantia hæc, corpo[ris] nis suæ principium manere non tantum po[test] neranda. At argumenta summæ probabilitatis g[ignit] minis ratio. Sed felicita[s] rest; & summam hom[inis] extiturum semper *homin*

IV. UNIO

ARatissimam esse c[on]cius est. In vincu[lo] *fluxum physicum* recurr[unt] peretur corporis actio utramque substantiam ridet. *Assistentiam* Dei ipsos ex parte creaturæ agit anima; vel stultè in corpore modificetu

V.

TOti corpori non [re]pondet; simplex dicatur. Veram anima nervis seu fibris non se[ri] funduntur nervi: erg[o] munionem habet, a similes prorsus dican[t] det diversa corporum

THESES
EX LOGICA ET PSYCHOLOGIA.

LOGICA, cogitandi ars, *jure cæteris Philosophiæ partibus præmittitur, ipsa quippè varias humanæ mentis operationes scrutatur & dirigit: & mente nobis nihil intimius.* The proper study of mankind is man, *inquit Poëta noster. At hujus disciplinæ tanta licet excellentia, tanta pulchritudo, tanta sit amœnitas: mirum quanto à multis in contemptu habeatur; vox* Logica *nauseam generat, & venerandum hujus scientiæ nomine falsò exornata. De rebus, non vocabulis agit sana ratio. Juvenilis animus gravi nugarum pressus pondere, onus fastidit, jugo se subtrahere luctatur, è Pistrino lætus emicat. Tota scenæ est: nos Logicam tractamus, ut prosit, & ut placeat: dicatur humanæ mentis historia. Perspectis variis animæ evolutionibus, ipsam mox examini subjicit* Psychologia, *de animâ sermo. At imperfecta hæc Metaphysicæ pars! Quasdam substantiæ spiritualis proprietates tenemus; res in occulto manet. Procul este profani: non audeat ulteriùs progredi temeraria omnia pervadendi cupido. Quicquid dicat Materialista, animam inter & corpus æternum & ineluctabile discrimen, inquit* de Buffon: *quod & demonstrat* Psychologus. *At si hæc quæstio rectè institueretur, non, credo, de animâ solâ hic Philosophus, hominem contemplaretur. Non est homo anima sola, non est corpus solum, sed ex unione cujusdam animæ cum quodam corpore ens mixtum resultans. Unionis hujus fixæ Leges. Ita hanc rem* [illegible] *vir Metaphysicus, Genevensis* Bonnet, *cui Dædaleos hos penetrare sinus, magis quàm sperare homini fas est, concessit Deus. Limites suos habet Philosophia, suos Theologia: vel potius suas uniant; id exoptat Religio, suadet ratio. Quæ corporis sunt, corpus habeat; quæ animæ sunt, anima habeat: justitiæ Lex est.* Nec Deus interfit, nisi dignus vindice nodus inciderit. *Brutis animum? mavult ratio & humanitas: à Materialistarum telis semet tueatur, qui brutorum operationes mechanicè interpretatus, latus hostî patefecit.*

I. *EX PROLEGOMENIS.*

DEfinitur Philosophia *perceptio rerum naturalium discursiva.* Procul eliminetur quæ à Malebranchio, quæ à Dagoumero traditur definitio. Placet Peripateticorum, quia cum nostra coincidit; displicet Platonicorum. Existere Philosophiam probat ipsius *objectum, subjectum, motivum.* Objectum res naturales; subjectum humana mens; motivum rerum evidentia & sensus intimus. Motivum aliud Metaphysicè, aliud moraliter dictum. Physicum, ab objecto nomen sumens, surreptitium. Sensibus errores suos nemo imputet.

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OMnis veritatis regula non est evidentia. Falsum ne dicas, quod *concipere* non vales; nec continuo *contra rationem* esse, quod *supra* illam esse dicitur, quicquid dicant Deistæ. Deo loquenti credendum: hîc ratio, exigit *testimonii* evidentia. *Methodicè* dubitans tutò progreditur; Cartesiandæ Philosophiæ via melior non est. Variæ existentiæ Philosophiæ variæ; quam vix homini *absolutè* necessariam dixerim. In varias dividitur species; naturalem tenet, qui ratione gaudet: Artificialis studio & meditatione acquiritur: infusam habere Adamo licuit, inquiunt Scholastici.

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I. IDEÆ.

MEns humana, variarum affectionum capax, varias modificationes subit. *Perceptio* est facultatis percipiendi seu *perceptibilitatis* modificatio; *sensatio* facultatis sentiendi seu *sensibilitatis* modificatio. Prior generalior. *Idea* latiore suo sensu est omnis essendi modus, cujus conscia est anima. Omni sui modificationi identificatur. Objecta externa, ope sensuum, sensationum occasiones. Solas suas modificationes sentit anima: ergo *extra se* [illegible] & inter se relatio, rerum omnium

IV. MEMORIA.

ILla animæ facultas, quâ ideæ semel impressæ, denuo revocantur, *memoria* dicitur. Quæ ideæ primum excitandæ requiritur occasio, eadem eidem resuscitandæ necessaria est: ejusdem effectûs eadem causa. In ipsâ idearum revocatione anima passiva, an activa est? Dicam, passiva. In somniis mira idearum series: hujus ratio sufficiens in impressionibus variis fibris communicatis quærenda. Hîc anima, contemplatrix otiosa, omnem modificationem lubens subit. Horrendum te invasit spectrum? Solâ mentis tuæ affectionem noli timere.

V. JUDICIUM.

SEcunda mentis operatio judicium, in comparatione duarum vel plurium idearum consistens: ergo est actus mentis. Relatio & rerum oppositio ex ipsarum essentiâ dimanat; quas inter & mentis capacitatem proportio primitiva. Judicium aliud *affirmativum* aliud *negativum* aliud; utrumque actus simplex; utrumque vel verum, vel falsum: nec una propositio alia verior. Propositio omnis, sensum habens, est semper determinatè vera vel falsa. Ubicumque inter duas ideas relationem vel oppositionem immediatè videt mens, habetur *evidentia*: in ipsâ fundatæ veritates *primariæ* sunt; aliæ *secundariæ*.

VI. DISCURSUS.

MEns inter ideas convenientiam vel disconvenientiam immediatè non percipiens, ad tertiam sui operationem progreditur, ideas alias advocando. Hæ *intermediæ* sunt; quarum collectio *discursus*, actus intellectûs à judicio distinctus. Variæ discursûs species ad veritatis inquisitionem excogitatæ. Opinio alia *latè*, alia *strictè* sumpta: illa, non hæc, simul cum scientiâ in eodem intellectu de eodem objecto sociabilis. Cautè argumentationis suæ partes disponens, quartam exercet mentis operationem, *methodum*. Hæc multiplex: usitatior *Analytica* & *Synthetica*: illa inquirendæ veritati utilissima & sola via: hæc veritati jam detectæ explicandæ inservit.

III. ANIMÆ IMMO[illegible]

SUbstantia hæc, corpori hîc intimè unita, nullam in se continet dissolutionis suæ principium; ab intrinseco *immortalis*. Corpori suo superstes manere non tantum potest, sed & manebit, [illegible] puniendâ, vel remuneranda. At argumenta tum Physica, tum Moralia hoc stabiliunt, summæ probabilitatis gradum non excedunt: altiùs non assurgit fulcimen hominis ratio. Sed felicitatis nostræ vestitatis hujus *certa* cognitio maximè interest; & summam hominis felicitatem intendit Deus: ergo ipse revelavit extiturum semper *hominem*: ergo credit Philosophus.

IV. UNIO CORPORIS ET ANIMÆ.

ARctissimam esse corpus inter & animam unionem, sibi quisque conscius est. In vinculi hujus naturâ explicandâ frustra desudatum. Ad *influxum physicum* recurrunt magni nominis Philosophi: [illegible] *si* [illegible] peretur corporis actio in spiritum, & vicissim. Leibnitzianorum inter utramque substantiam *præstabilita harmonia*, viro Philosopho nullum arridet. *Assistentium* Dei *specialem* advocat cum suis *verbotenus inquisitor*. Juxta ipsos ex parte creaturæ nil nisi *occasiones*, operatio omnis Dei est. At vel ipsa agit anima; vel stultè *activa* dicitur. Nobis sufficit, quod occasione motûs in corpore modificetur anima, & vicissim.

V. ANIMÆ SEDES.

TOti corpori non coextenditur anima; inextensa est: partibus non respondet; simplex est: igitur modo spiritui proprio corpori *præsens* dicatur. Veram animæ *sedem* determinare quis *certò* novit? Ni medullosi nervis seu fibris non sentit anima: è cerebro in omnem corporis partem diffunduntur nervi: ergo organum illud, quod cum omnibus sensibus communionem habet, animæ sedem *probabilis* dixerim. Si animæ omnes similes prorsus dicantur, ingeniorum diversitatis causam sufficientem reddet diversa corporum organizatio. Humana anima in Ostreæ cerebro incarcerata unquamne ad veritates Metaphysicas assurgeret?

EX LOGICA ET PSYCHOLOGIA.

LOGICA, cogitandi ars, *jure cæteris Philosophiæ partibus præmittitur, ipsa quippè varias humanæ mentis operationes scrutatur & dirigit: & mente nobis nihil intimius.* The proper study of mankind is man, *inquit Poëta noster. At hujus disciplinæ tanta licet excellentia, tanta pulchritudo, tanta sit amœnitas: mirum quanto à multis in contemptu habeatur; vox* Logica *nauseam generat, & venerando bilem movet. Verùm, dicam enim, hanc infamiæ notam Logicæ infixit teterrima illa verborum farrago, litium fomes, ingeniorum lues, à Scholasticâ gregis Aristotelici familiâ excogitata, & è Pistorino limo emicat. hujus scientiæ nomine falsò exornata. De rebus, non vocabulis agit sana ratio. Juvenilis animus gravi nugarum pressus pondere, onus fastidit, jugo se subtrahere luctatur, è Pistorino limo emicat. ista scena est: nos Logicam tractamus, ut prosit, & ut placeat: dicatur humanæ mentis historia. Perspectis variis animæ evolutionibus, ipsam mox examini subjicit* Psychologia, *de animâ sermo. At imperfecta hæc Metaphysicæ pars! Quasdam substantiæ spiritualis proprietates tenemus; res in occulto manet. Procul este profani: non audeat ulteriùs progredi temeraria omnia pervadendi cupido. Quicquid dicat Materialista, animam inter & corpus æternum & ineluctabile discrimen, inquit* de Buffon: *quod & demonstrat* Psychologus. *At si hæc quæstio rectè institueretur, non, credo, de animâ solâ hic ret Philosophus, hominem contemplaretur. Non est homo anima sola, non est corpus solum, sed ex unione cujusdam animæ cum quodam corpore ens mixtum resultans. Unionis hujus fixæ Leges. Ita hanc rem minat vir Metaphysicus, Genevensis* Bonnet, *cui Dædaleos hos penetrare sinus, magis quàm sperare homini fas est, concessit Deus. Limites suos habet Philosophia, suos Theologia: vel potius is suas uniant; id exoptat Religio, suadet ratio. Quæ corporis sunt, corpus habeat; quæ animæ sunt, anima habeat: justitiæ Lex est.* Nec Deus intersit, nisi dignus vindice nodus inciderit. *Brutis animam e mavult ratio & humanitas: à Materialistarum: is semet tueatur, qui brutorum operationes mechanicè interpretatus, latus hosti patefecit.*

EX PROLEGOMENIS.

Definitur Philosophia *perceptio rerum naturalium discursiva.* Procul eliminetur quæ à Malebranchio, quæ à Dagoumero traditur definitio. Placet Peripateticorum, quia cum nostra coincidit; displicet Platonicorum. Existere Philosophiam probat ipsius *objectum, subjectum, motivum.* Objectum res naturales; subjectum humana mens; motivum rerum evidentia & sensus intimus. Motivum aliud Metaphysicè, aliud moraliter sumptum. Physicum, ab objecto nomen sumens, surreptitium. Sensibus errores suos nemo imputet.

EX IISDEM.

Veritatis regula non est evidentia. Falsum ne dicas, quod concipere non valeas; nec continuo *contra rationem* esse, quod *supra* rationem existimatur, quicquid dicant Deistæ. Deo loquente credendum: ipsius ratio, exigit *testimonii* evidentia. *Methodicè* dubitans tutò progreditur; Philosophiæ via melior non est. Variæ existentiæ Philosophiæ sectæ; quam vix homini *absolutè* necessariam dixerim. In varias dividitur species; naturalem tenet, qui ratione gaudet: Artificialis studio & meditatione acquiritur: infusam habere Adamo licuit, inquiunt Scholastici.

EX LOGICA.

I. IDEÆ.

Ens humanum, variarum affectionum capax, varias modificationes subit. *Perceptio* est facultatis percipiendi seu *perceptibilitatis* modificatio; *sensatio* facultatis sentiendi seu *sensibilitatis* modificatio. Prior generalior. *Idea* latiore suo sensu est omnis essendi modus, cujus conscia est anima. Omni sui modificationi identificatur. Objecta externa, ope sensuum, sensationum occasiones. Solas suas modificationes sentit anima: ergo *extra se* nihil percipit: ergo ideæ nostræ, & ipsarum inter se relatio, rerum omnium universitatem, respectu nostri, constituant: at corpora existunt. Solus Malebranchius omnia in Deo vidit: nos in nobis.

II. IDEARUM ORIGO.

Sensationum diversitas ab objectorum & organorum diversitate pendet; ipsæ inter se essentialiter distinguuntur, quicquid de corporum existentiâ dicatur. *Quomodo* occasione motûs in organo excitati sentiat anima, nescio. Nobis insunt rerum externarum tum materialium, tum spiritualium ideæ; similiter internarum. Malè de idearum origine sentiunt Epicurei; malè Peripatetici; pejus Cartesiani, si. se nobis innasci docent. Qui omni sensu careret, ideâ careret omni; anima quippè, corpori unita, nisi ipso mediante, non agit, non sentit, non percipit &c: ergo verum docent *Lock, Bonnet* &c.

III. IDEÆ SIMPLICES, COMPLEXÆ &c.

Omnis idea sui sensum facit, se modificari sentit anima. Si simplex; idea omnis clara & distincta: si composita; obscura quandoque & confusa. Celebris in *simplices & complexas* distinctio. In simplicibus recipiendis mens, instar speculi, passiva est, ipsis attendendo agit: complexas aliquas efformat, alias, variâ objectorum actione recipit. Objecti compositi partem unam considerat? Abstractio partialis est: modum? Abstractio modalis: aliquid pluribus commune? Abstractio sit generalis. De *Universalibus* & *Categoriis*, difficilibus nugis, hic agere vetat sana ratio.

IV. MEMORIA.

Illa animæ facultas, quâ ideæ semel impressæ, denuo revocantur, *memoria* dicitur. Quæ ideæ primum exercendæ requiritur occasio, eadem eidem resuscitandæ necessaria est: ejusdem effectûs eadem causa. In ipsâ idearum revocatione anima passiva, an activa est? Dicam, passiva. In somniis mira idearum series: hujus ratio sufficiens in impressionibus variis fibris communicatis quærenda. Hic anima, contemplatrix otiosa, omnem modificationem lubens subit. Horreadum te invalidæ spectrum? Solam mentis tuæ affectionem noli timere.

V. JUDICIUM.

Secunda mentis operatio judicium, in comparatione duarum vel plurium idearum consistens: ergo est actus mentis. Relatio & rerum oppositio ex ipsarum essentiâ dimanat; quas inter & mentis capacitatem proportio relativa. Judicium aliud *affirmativum*, aliud *negativum* aliud; utrumque aliud simples; utrumque vel verum, vel falsum: nec una propositio alia veritate. Propositio omnis, sensum habens, est semper determinatè vera vel falsa. Ubicumque inter duas ideas relationem vel oppositionem immediatè videt mens, habetur *evidentia*: in ipsâ fundatæ veritates *primariæ* sunt; aliæ *secundariæ*.

VI. DISCURSUS.

Mens inter ideas convenientiam vel disconvenientiam immediatè non percipiens, ad rerum sui operationem progreditur, ideas alias advocando. Hæ *intermediæ* sunt; quarum collectio *discursus*, actus intellectûs à judicio distinctus. Variæ discursûs species ad veritatis inquisitionem excogitatæ. Opinio alia *latè*, alia *strictè* sumpta: illa, non hæc, simul cum scientiâ in eodem intellectu de eodem objecto sociabilis. Cautè argumentationis suæ partes disponens, quartam exercet mentis operationem, *methodum*. Hæc multiplex: usitatior *Analytica* & *Synthetica*: illa inquirendæ veritati utilissima & sola via: hæc veritati jam detectæ explicandæ inservit.

EX PSYCHOLOGIA.

I. ANIMA A MATERIA DISTINCTA.

Entis humanæ nomine intelligitur illud principium, quod in nobis varias modificationes subiens, nunc sentit, nunc percipit, nunc cogitat, nunc vult &c. In principii hujus naturâ assignandâ non omnium una est sententia. Aliud docent Materialistæ, aliud saniores Philosophi. Est enim substantia hæc ab omni materiâ, omnique materiæ modificatione prorsùs aliena. Si detur aliqua cogitatio, volitio &c, quam non esse materiæ modificationem ipsi agnoscunt, operationes nostras è materiâ necessario oriri non ostenditur: primum demonstramus. Ad corpuscula pernicissimè agitata stultè recurrunt Epicurus, Spinosa, Hobbs.

II. ANIMÆ DESCRIPTIO &c.

Materiæ elementa, licet simplicia, non cogitant: ergo nec unquam cogitare poterunt: omne ens tantum habet, quantum habere potest; cogitet materia, illicò materia non est, inquiunt Leibnitziani. Dicatur anima substantia *simplex, inextensa, spiritualis*. At substantia simplex est: ergo cogitat, cave inferas. Num plures *simul* modificationes induere potest mens? Ab actu ad potentiam valet consecutio. Ipsius essentia in cogitatione *actuali*, vel etiam *radicali* malè ponitur. Quid non sit dicam, quid sit nescio. Hæc Philosophus nescit, non ignorat.

III. ANIMÆ IMMORTALITAS.

Substantia hæc, corpori hic intimè unita, nullam in se continet dissolutionis suæ principium; ab intrinseco *interitus* Corpori tùm minime non tantum potest, sed & manebit, [illegible] mutuendi, vel renovanda. At argumenta tum Physica, tum Moralia hoc fundata, summæ probabilitatis gradum non excedunt: altiùs non assurgit hujus minimi ratio. Sed felicitatis nostræ vestitis hujus certa cognitio nobis interest; & summam hominis felicitatem intendit Deus: ergo ipse revelavit exiturum semper *hominem*: ergo credit Philosophus.

IV. UNIO CORPORIS ET ANIMÆ.

Arctissimam esse corpus inter & animam unionem, sibi mutuus consensus eius est. In vinculi hujus naturâ explicandâ frustra desudatum, ad *fluxum physicum* recurrunt magni nominis Philosophi: frustra, si comperetur corporis actio in spiritum, & vicissim. Leibnitzianorum inter utramque substantiam *præstabilita harmonia*, vir Philosophus nullus ridet. *Assistentiam* Dei *specialem* advocat cum suis veritatis [illegible] ipsos ex parte creaturæ nil nisi *occasiones*, operatio omnis Dei est. Ars agit anima; vel stultè *influxu* dicitur. Nobis sufficit, quod occasione motûs in corpore modificetur anima, & vicissim.

V. ANIMÆ SEDES.

Toti corpori non coextenditur anima; inextensa est: partibus non respondet; simplex est: igitur modo spirituali proprio corpori *præsens* dicatur. Veram animæ *sedem* determinare quis certò novit? Ni medullosi nervis seu fibris non sentit anima: è cerebro in omnem corporis partem funduntur nervi: ergo organum illud, quod cum omnibus sensationibus communionem habet, animæ sedem *probabilius* dixerim. Si animæ omnes similes prorsus dicantur, ingeniorum diversitatis causam [illegible] der diversa corporum organizatio. Humana anima in Orbem carcere incarcerata unquamne ad veritates Metaphysicas assurgeret?

VI. ANIMÆ ORIGO.

De animæ origine multiplex olim opinio. Errant Stoici & Platonici. Nulla admittenda metempsycosis. Num certis [illegible] ab initio mundi unitæ sunt à Deo mentes, ut docent [illegible], supponentes simultaneam rerum omnium creationem? Num [illegible] *creando infunduntur, & infundendo creantur*, ubi absoluta est corporum organizatio? Hæc sententia communior est; illa magis Philosophica. Infeliciè sanè effatum illud *Mag. Sen.* à quibusdam tanquam infallibili, Ecclesiæ vox interpretatur.

VII. ANIMA BRUTORUM.

De animâ brutorum quæstio difficilis. *Probabilius* ipsis animam inesse docet analogia. Anima hæc substantia simplex est, variarum modificationum capax. Quo plures sensus, eo plures sensationes: quo hæ plures, perfectius est animal; & eo magis animal, quo perfectior cerebri organizatio. Simiam inter & Ostream quanta distantia! Ipsorum ideæ omnes *sensibiles*. Cur operentur, rationem dat *præstans inopia*; operis modum explicat *certa organorum dispositio*. Sensum internum *materialem* malè fingit *de Buffon*. Inter animal *sensitivum* & *intellectuale* æternum discrimen ponit actionum moralitas & abstrahendi facultas, inquiunt *de Needham, Bonnet* &c. Peritne unà cum corpore hæc animula?

HAS THESES Præside Erudit. Domino JOSEPHO BERINGTON, *Philosophiæ Professore.*

TUERI CONABITUR IN AULA COLLEGII ANGLORUM DUACENI.

Dom. CAROLUS Mc CARTHY. *Die 20 Martii 1771, horâ nonâ matutinâ ad undecimam.*

DUACI, apud DEL[illegible]. Typographum viâ Scholarum, sub signo Mitralis.

Appendix B.

"Transalpine - Cisalpine".

From Charles Butler's Historical Memoirs of the Church of France in Philological and Biographical Works (London 1817), vol.IV, pp.37-38

"In spiritual concerns, the transalpine opinions ascribe to the pope a superiority, and a controlling power over the whole church, should she oppose his decrees, and consequently over a general council, its representative; and the same superiority and controlling power, even in the ordinary course of business, over the canons of the universal church. They describe the pope, as the fountain of all ecclesiastical order, jurisdiction and dignity. They assign to him, the power of judging all persons in spiritual concern, of calling all spiritual causes to his cognizance; of constituting, suspending, and deposing bishops; of conferring all ecclesiastical dignities and benefices, in or out of his dominions, by paramount authority: of exempting individuals or communities from the jurisdiction of their prelates; of evoking to himself, or judges appointed by him, any cause actually pending in an ecclesiastical court; and of receiving immediately, appeals from all sentences of ecclesiastical courts, though they be inferior courts from which there is a regular appeal to an immediate superior court. They further ascribe to the pope, the extraordinary prerogative of personal infallibility, when he undertakes to issue a solemn decision on any point of faith.

The Cisalpines affirm, that in spirituals, the pope is subject in doctrine and discipline, to the church and to a general council

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The Cisalpines affirm, that in spirituals, the pope is subject in doctrine and discipline, to the church and to a general council

representing her; that he is subject to the canons of the church, and cannot, except in an extreme case, dispense with them; that even in such a case, his dispensation is subject to the judgement of the church; that the bishops derive their jurisdiction from God himself, immediately, and not derivatively through the pope: that he has no right to confer bishoprics, or other spiritual benefices of any kind, the patronage of which by common right, prescription, concordat, or any other general rule of the Church, is vested in another. They admit, that an appeal lies to the pope from the sentence of the metropolitan; but assert, that no appeal lies to the pope, and that he can evoke no cause to blame himself, during the intermediate process. They affirm, that a general council may, without, and even against the pope's consent, reform the church - They deny his personal infallibility, and hold that he may be deposed by the church or a general council, for heresy or schism; and they admit, that in an extreme case, where there is a great division of opinion, an appeal lies from the pope to a future general council".

APPENDIX C

Biographies of most of the principal figures in the disputes are to be found in the standard Catholic reference works or in D.N.B. The following brief notes on the Cisalpine/Orthodox leaders are intended simply for convenient identification. The letters 'C' and 'O' signify the sides taken in the disputes.

Archer, James, D.D. (1751-1834) C.

Born London. Douai 1769. Mission 1780 (London)
Vicar General of the London District. The most famous Catholic preacher of his time. Bavarian Chaplaincy 1791. Papal D.D. 1821

Bannister, Robert (1725-1812) O

Born Hesketh Bank, Lancashire. Douai 1741, Priest 1750. Professor of Divinity 1757. Mission 1769. Divinity Professor again at Douai 1773, dismissed 1774. Mission at Lowbreck in Lancashire.

Barnard, James. (1733-1803) O

Convert, educated at the Blue-coat School, London. Trained for priesthood at English College, Lisbon. Mission 1761. President, English College at Lisbon 1776-1782. Mission 1782 (London) and Vicar General of the London District.

Berington, Charles. D.D. (Bishop) (1748-1798) C

Born Moat-Hall, Shropshire. Douay 1761, St. Gregory's, Paris 1765. Sorbonne D.D. 1776. Mission 1776 at Ingatestone, then travelling tutor to Mr. Gifford of Chillington, in France, Italy and Germany. Coadjutor to Bishop Thomas Talbot 1786, with title Hierocaesaria. Settled at Oscott with his cousin Joseph Berington (q.v.). Succeeded per obitum. 1795. Died of a fit of apolexy, June 8, 1798

Berington, Joseph (1743-1827) C

Born Winsley, Herefordshire. Douai 1755. Professor Philosophy 1769, Licentiate of Divinity in 1770. Dismissed from Douay 1772; at Winsley till 1775, when he went to Wolverhampton. 1766 tutor/ companion to the Stapletons of Carlton in Yorkshire. 'Grand Tour' 1782-4. 1785 Mission at Oscott. 1793 Buckland, Berkshire, as Chaplain to Sir John Throckmorton. Died as the result of a fall, December, 1827.

Bew, John. D.D. C

Born London: Douay 1769. St. Gregory's Paris, 1782, Procurator of St. Gregory's. 1786, President. Returned to England on the outbreak of the Revolution. Chaplain to Giffords of Flintshire. 1794 President of the new Seminary at Oscott. Resigned 18 . Missioner at Brighton. President of St. Edmund's College, Ware, 1812. Died at Havant, October 1829.

Butler, Charles (1750-1832) C

Born London. Douai 1762. Returned to England 1766, studied law from 1769. 1775 entered Lincoln Inn, as conveyancer. Catholic Committee Secretary from 1782. Editor of 'Coke upon Littleton'. Called to the Bar 1791.

Carter, John. (1736-1803) C

Born Standish, Lancashire. Douay 1762, defended Philosophy under Joseph Berington. Mission 1777 at Wolverhampton (succeeded Berington). Well known preacher. Died March 1803.

Chadwick, John. (- 1802) C

Born at Preston. Douai in (?). Mission 1758 at Weldbank, near Chorley. V.G. Northern District, 1780.

Clough, Anthony (1729-1793) C

Born at Mintown, Shropshire. Douai (1741). Mission 1755, at Northwich. 1758 to Chillington. 1791 left Chillington on the marriage of Thomas Gifford to a Protestant. Went to Heythorp, then to Oscott.
He was cousin to Joseph Berington, Vicar General of the Middle District, and the instigator of the Staffordshire Clergy.

Douglass, John D.D. (Bishop) (1743-1812) O

Born Yarm, Yorkshire. Douai 1756, 1768 Professor of Humanities at Valladolid. 1773 Mission at York. 1790 V.A. London, with the title Centuria. Founded St. Edmund's, Old Hall Green (Ware).

Dunn, William (vere Earpe), D.D. (? - 1805) C

Douai 1770, Paris 1772. D.D. 1782. Mission 1782 at Blackburn.

Englefield, Sir Henry Charles (1752-1822) C

Antiquary and Scientific amateur. Fellow and President of the Society of Antiquaries. Secretary of the Dilettanti Society. Collector (especially of vases). Fellow of the Royal Society, 1778. A close friend of Charles James Fox.

Geddes, Alexander, LL.D. (1737-1802) C

Born Ruthven, Banffshire, Scotland. 1758 Scotch College, Paris. 1764 Scottish Mission. 1769 Auchinalrig, Banffshire. 1780 quarelled with Bishop Hay and came to London. LL.D. from Aberdeen same year. Imperial Embassy Chapel, 1780, patronised by Lord Petre. His Bible Translation appeared 1792-7. Died under Ecclesiastical censure, but having received the sacraments from a friend.

Gibson, Matthew, (Bishop) (1734-1790) O

Born Stonecroft, near Hexham. Douai 1747. Professor of Philosophy 1758; Divinity 1762. 1768 Mission. Vicar General Northern District 1777. 1780 consecrated to the North, with the Title Comana.

Gibson, William (Bishop) (1738-1821) O

Brother of preceeding. Douai oath 1755. Mission at Ministeracres 1765. 1781 President of Douai. 1790 consecrated to the North, with the Title Acanthos. Founded Ushaw College

Hussey, Thomas (Bishop) (1741-1803) C

Studied at Salamanca, entered La Trappe, but on papal orders entered the service of the King of Spain. Chaplain to Spanish Embassy in London 1767. During American Revolution employed on diplomatic mission to Spain by the British Government. Fellow of the Royal Society 1792. President of Maynooth 1796, + Bishop of Waterford. A friend of Johnson and of Burke.

Milner, John, D.D. (Bishop) (1752-1826) O

vere Miller, born London. Douai 1766. Mission 1777, librarian to Old Chapter; 1779, Winchester. Consecrated to Middle District 1803, with the title Castabala. Fellow of Society of Antiquaries.

Petre, Robert Edward. 9th Lord. (1742-1801) C

Educated at St. Omer(?). Grand Master of the English Free Masons 1772; a friend of George III, . Member of the Catholic Committee and the Whig Club.

Plowden, Charles S.J. (1743-1821) O

Born at Plowden, Shropshire. Entered Society 1759 at Watten. Studied at Bologna and Rome. Minister of the English College, Bruges, till the Suppression, then at Liege. 1784 Chaplain to Welds of Lulworth. 1794, Stonyhurst. 1803 Master of Hodder Place Novitiate. Provincial of restored Society 1817, and Rector of Stonyhurst. Died in France 1821 and (by some error) was buried with military honours!

Plowden, Francis (1749-1829) O/C

Brother of preceeding. Entered Jesuit novitiate 1766; returned to secular life on the Suppression. Conveyancer in Middle Temple. Honorary Oxford DCL for his 'Jura Anglorum'. Called to the Bar 1796. As a result of a libel suit fled to Paris, where he died in 1829.

Pilling, William Leo, O.S.F. (1741-1801) O

Born Lancashire. Professed at St. Bonaventure's Douay. Professor of Philosophy 1770-6. Theology 1776-82. Mission at Hereford 1785-7. London 1787-1801.

Rigby, John, D.D. (1754-1817) C

Douai in (?). Paris 1773. D.D., 1784. Acting President of St. Gregories 1783. Mission at Lancaster 1784.

Rigby, Thomas, D.D. (? - 1815) C

Elder brother of preceeding. St. Gregories, Paris 1771. D.D., 1782. Mission at London 1782. Chaplain at Lincolns Inn Fields. Famous for his Catechetical Instructions. Vicar General of London District.

Sharrock, Gregory William, O.S.B. (Bishop) (1742-1809) O

Born Preston. St. Gregory's, Douai 1755. Mission at Lanark 1781. Coadjutor to Bishop Walmesley with title Thelma.

Talbot, James. (Bishop) (1726-1790) O

Nephew of the Earl of Shrewsbury. Douai 1737-8.
1749 Professor of Philosophy, then Divinity.
President/Founder of the Douai Prep-school at
Esquerchin. Coadjutor to Challenor 1759 with title
Bitha. Tried for his priesthood 1771. Succeeded
Challenor 1781.

Talbot, Thomas (Bishop) (1727-1795) O

Douai 1739-40(?). Mission at Norwich 1749.
1754 Brockhampton, Sussex. President, St. Omer 1762.
Coadjutor to Bishop Hornyold 1766, with title Acon.
V.A. 1779. Died at Bristol.

Throckmorton, Sir John Courtenay (1753-1819) C

Born at Weston. Succeeded to his grandfather's title in
1791, and moved to Buckland. President of 'The Friends of
the People', a friend of Cowper's.

Walmesley, Charles, O.S.B. (Bishop) (1722-1797) O

Born Westwood House, Wigan. Professed at St. Edmund's,
Paris, 1739. Sorbonne D.D. Prior 1749. Procurator-
General (Rome) 1753. 1756 consecrated coadjutor to
Bishop York of the Western District, with the title
Rama. 1763 V.A.
An eminent mathematician. Fellow of Royal Society.

Wheeler, James (n.d.) C

Chaplain at Moorfields in the 1790's, published several
volumes of sermons, celebrated for his charity appeals.
He was working in the Northern District in 1810, still alive 1835.

Wilkes, Joseph O.S.B. (d. 1829) C

Professed at St. Edmund's, Paris. Chaplain to the
Fitzherberts of Swynnerton in Staffordshire. Bath,
1786/7, elected to Catholic Committee in 1788.
Left England 1792, returned to Middle District (Heythrop)
1794. 1800 withdrawn from Mission at Bishop W. Gibson's
insistence. Died at Douai.

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